TALES FROM BRITISH INDIA

Compiled by

Terence R. Blackburn

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

The tales in this book arose from a fortuitous purchase of several volumes of *The Asiatic Journal etc.*, published during the first half of the 19th century. Its remarkable pages are crammed with letters, reports, articles and accounts of life experienced in India during those tumultuous days when the British were determined to take over the country, while the native rulers understandably resisted.

These selected tales are an extraordinary collection of eye-witness accounts concerning crafty missionaries, tiger hunts, huge bands of plunderers, rapists and murderers known as the Pindaries, the unspeakable ill treatment of captive females, horrendous human sacrifices practiced by the Khond tribes, the exotic and fatal diseases suffered by the British, and the terrible battles between the celebrated Hyder Ali, his son, Tippoo Sultan and the East India Company.

As these rare volumes of *The Asiatic Journal* are well beyond the reach of the average reader with an interest in India of the first half of the 19th century, I felt that such contemporary material will never see the light of day unless, I or others like me, take the trouble to seek them out and make them available to the general public.

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Introduction

For the reader who delights in historical incidents, this book of tales from British India which originally appeared in *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies*, a semi official publication produced between 1816–1845, may prove to be difficult to put down. Narrated by the participants, it opens up a whole new field of study of the thoughts and manners of the British in India in the 1800s. A time when honour and honesty were paramount, when a duel would be fought for a perceived insult. An apology might suffice to turn away the wrath of the aggrieved party, otherwise death or injury would be the price.

Only with such rules or behaviour could a group of officers of the King and the East India Company be made to bend to the discipline, which they showed on every occasion where it was required of them. They led their men from the front, with no more fear than that they may be found wanting in valour, courage or dash.

The Officers purchased their splendid uniforms, the wearing of which gave rise to a feeling of superiority, some would say arrogance, they bought their commissions, often costing many thousands of pounds for a senior rank in a smart regiment. They were respected by their subordinates, their superiors were careful to observe the usual courtesies. Officers were never ordered, they were desired, required or directed.

Many of the tales in this compilation provide an insight into the life of British Officers in India during those early days. Although some of the stories are of unimaginable brutality, they also display a charming naivety. On reading them, I was immediately of the opinion that these accounts should be retold as I feel that a whole new genre of story telling has opened up.

Glossary

Anoomarana (Anugamanum) : A suttee, a Hindu widow who joins her dead husband on his funeral pyre.

Batta : An extra allowance paid to men and officers when in the field.

Beluchi : One of the tribes of Afghanistan.

Bhang : *Cannabis salvia* or *indica*, a hallucinogenic drug.

Brahmin : A member of the priestly class of the Hindu religion .

Buhuka : A mental condition described as 'straying of the mind'.

Burkuw : A term for 'want of self possession' or self control.

Burkundauze : An armed policeman, watchman, door keeper, guard.

Cafferies : An infidel, an unbeliever in the Muslim faith.

Cantonment : Fortified soldier's barracks.

Chawk : An open air market or bazaar.

Chout : A large amount of money/treasure paid in blackmail to prevent the Marathas plundering a province.

Chuprassee, Chuprassie or **Chuprassy** : A messenger in a civil office, he wears a chapras or badge on a cross belt stating the office he works for.

Chokidar : A private watchman.

Cholera Morbus : A virulent waterborne disease which will cause death within a few hours if untreated.

Dacoits : Bands of armed thieves.

Darogha : The chief native officer, head of the police station.

Dawk : Postal services.

Dour or **dours** : A raid or hasty expedition

Dussera : A Hindu festival.

Dattoora or **Datura** ***(Stramonium: Datura Tatula)*** : A drug produced from a variety of thorn apple, given to a victim by a thief. It produces 'temporary alienation of the mind, thus allowing the thief to act unopposed'.

Durbar : A native court.

Fakeer : A Hindu religious medicant.

Fanam : A small coin worth about 2 (old) British pence in 1818.

Feringee : A disparaging epithet for a European.

Fortalioe : A small fortified place or outwork.

Futwah or **fatwa** : Written permission or order.

Ghaut : A landing place, a quay, a path to a river.

Halberds : Lances with a heavy cutting blade about 15 feet long.

Hirkarah, hircarrah or **hurcarrah** : A courier, a representative, a messenger or even a secret agent.
Hookar : A hubble bubble pipe.
Imambaarah : A Shia Muslim shrine used during the festival of Muhurrum.
Jogee or **jogi** : A practitioner of yoga, Hindu holy man, magician.
Jungle mehals : A parcel of land.
Kafila or **cafila** : A caravan, a travelling group of merchants.
Kali : Another form of the goddess Devi, the spouse of the Hindu god Shiva.
Kotwal : Chief police officer of a kotwali—police station. Sometimes a principal officer of a fort.
Killadar : The commandant of a fort or castle.
Koran : The holy book of the Muslims.
Kutcheree : A hall of audience.
Lubur : A raiding party.
Mahomedan, Musslaman, Moorman : Followers of the teachings of Mohamed.
Mahal : Private building or residence, summer house or palace.
Mahout : An elephant rider who directs the animal.
Mohurram : A Muslim festival lasting about a month.
Mooktear : An agent.
Midan : An open space.
Muhooka shurab : Intoxicating liquor distilled from the flow of the bassia latifolia. In Bengal the drink is known as *doatushuh* or *doasta*.
Nizamut adalut : The supreme authority of the Nizam of Hydrabad.
Nullah : A water course usually dry except after the monsoon.
Omrah : A high official at a Muslim court.
Pagoda : A gold coin worth three-quarter rupees in 1818.
Pindari, Pindarry, Pindarries : A large band of plunders and murderers.
Polygars : A subordinate chief.
Pukka : Substantial, permanent, mature.
Putneedars : A person who holds a tenancy of the zemindar.
Scbundies, Seebundies : Irregular native soldiery paid quarterly.
Shroff : A banker.
Sipahi : Sepoy.
Sircar : A native banker.
Sudder adalut : Court of Justice.
Syed, Syud : Those who claim descent from Mahommed.
Thana : A police station.
Thanadar : Head officer at a police station.
Vakeel : An ambassador or representative of a ruler.

Wallah : A suffix applied to a trade or profession, such as 'competiton wallah' one who has succeeded in the Company's examination.

Wolsars, wolsas : Strongholds.

Zamindar : Someone who rents his land directly from the Government.

Zilla : A district of the local government.

Chapter One

Native Society in India

Dacoity

It has already been stated, in those papers inserted in the Asiatic Journal which are illustrative of native manners, that particular districts in India are remarkable for the commissioning of particular offences: and that the people of Bengal, though anything but honest, are especially addicted to the commission of petty kinds of robbery.

In the Upper Provinces, the transgressors of the law are of a much more daring character, and they will frequently sally forth in large bodies, and make a dash at some object of importance. The houses of the shroffs, or bankers, are especially marked out for such depredations; the treasure they contain being in specie, and consequently rather cumbrous, it is necessary that large numbers should be assembled for the purpose of carrying it off.

In order to effect this object, plans quite as ingenious as many employed in England for plundering banking houses and other public edifices, are put into practice, by which some of the confederates contrive to obtain access to the interior, and to discover the exact position of the chests which contain the treasure. It is astonishing with what ease natives of India, who have received little or no education, and who may be of low caste, will assume the manners of their superiors.

A man with a good address, a handsome person, and graceful carriage, is selected on an occasion of importance—one who is a stranger in the place in which the affair is to be carried on, and who, gifted with invention, can be ready with a plausible answer to every question that may be out to him. Such a person is provided with a dress suited to his assumed rank, and attendants if necessary.

He presents himself with great confidence at the door of the shroff, taking care to impress the domestics who may be in waiting with a proper idea of

his consequence. He makes a display of money, and shapes his enquiries with great adroitness, so as to ascertain the probable amount of property, either in specie or jewels, and the best plan of proceeding in order to obtain possession of it.

He takes occasion to repeat his visit more than once, making some purchases, and negotiating for others with an air of the greatest liberality. Having become thoroughly acquainted with the localities of the house, the gang assemble in some secluded place at a convenient distance, and determine upon their future operations.

A wedding procession is the usual cover for their entrance in the town, the palanquins that accompany it serving as deposits for arms. Such a device, however, being frequently practised, is apt to grow stale, and recourse must be had to a more novel contrivance.

Although the left wing of a regiment was stationed within three miles of a large native town, near the banks of the Jumna, the house of a wealthy shroff was robbed by a tumultuous concourse of armed men, before the alarm could be given to the military, who hastened at first summons to the scene of action.

The premises had previously been reconnoitred and examined by one of the confederates, who had insinuated himself into the confidence of the owner, the latter expecting to make a large profit by his dealings with a customer showing the most princely nature. The dacoits entered the town under the pretence of being devotees going to a place of pilgrimage. Many were disguised as fakeers, and they had bullocks with them, which carried wedges, sledge-hammers, and other burglarious implements, wrapped up in unsuspicious-looking bundles.

Arriving from different points, the greater number took up their quarters in a large deserted building; the remainder dispersing themselves about the place, after having deposited their weapons with their companions. In addition to the chokeydars belonging to the town, the shroff, whose house was menaced, maintained private watchmen at his own expense, and these were stationed at their usual places on the outside.

The house, to judge from its exterior, was remarkably strong, and difficult of access; the town, Etawah, having formally been a place of great consequence, the residence of rich and powerful omras, though at the present time in a state of decay, there were many buildings which still presented a very imposing appearance. This in particular, was lofty and solid, with thick massive walls, the breadth not being proportioned to the height, and consequently affording less facilities of access than a low mansion, spreading over a large space of ground.

One large heavy door, profusely studded on the outside with broad-headed nails, formed the sole entrance towards the street, and here the party composing the night watch had posted themselves. Although remaining sufficiently awake to converse with each other, not expecting danger of any kind, they were far from being on the alert, deeming their presence quite sufficient to prevent any attack.

Suddenly, however, they found themselves overpowered, and disabled from giving the alarm. In the dead of night—for they took care not to commence a disturbance too early—the dacoits, well armed, and provided with the means of forcing an entrance, quitted their place of concealment, cut down the guard, who they quickly gagged and bound, and then attacked the house. The door, strong as it was, speedily gave way; the chiefs of the party, headed by the person who had previously inspected the interior apartments, entered the chambers where the treasure was deposited, while the remainder kept the door.

The noise awakened the people of the town, but seeing so large and determined a banditti—for the gang mustered more than 100 men—they were afraid to interfere; and it was not until they had recovered from their first panic, that anybody thought of summoning the sepoys.

Meanwhile the chests were forced, and their contents rifled, in an incredibly short period; the unfortunate shroff, who had quitted his bed when the house was invaded, being wounded by one of the miscreants and left for dead.

Having possessed themselves of every thing they could reasonably carry off, the robbers retreated to the river, where they had boats in readiness. Embarking, they speedily passed over into Bundelkhund, and before morning, threading ravines only known to themselves, were beyond the reach of pursuit.

The instant that this outrage was made known in the neighbouring cantonments, the drums beat to arms, and the sepoys, mustering in haste, marched down to the city, scarcely knowing what they were to encounter, for, amongst other reports, it was said that Runjeet Singh had invaded the Company's provinces, and was coming down in great force. They had the mortification to find the banker's house ransacked, and the thieves escaped; the proximity of the building to the river, and the excellent manner in which every thing had been planned, enabling them to get clear off with the booty.

A considerable period elapsed before the sepoys were reconciled to their disappointment, as they clung as long as possible to the hope that Runjeet Singh would in reality make his appearance, all their martial ardour being aroused on hearing that he was actually on the march.

The magistrate belonging to the zilla was absent at the time, on a tour of duty; but he hastened to the scene of action as soon as the account of the robbery reached his ears. Several persons belonging to the town were taken into custody, suspected of being aiders and abettors in the affair; but nothing could be proved against them, excepting their notorious bad characters; and although some persons fancied that they recognised a noted leader of dacoits in one of the principal parties engaged, his identity was never thoroughly ascertained. One or two of the people who were assaulted died of their wounds, and the shroff himself was badly injured.

At another time, the treasure chest of the collector of an inland station invited the cupidity of a gang of robbers; and they determined, if possible, to make themselves masters of the contents. This was a difficult achievement, since it could not be effected by open violence, the numerous armed attendants, the chuprassees, burkandauzes, and others, being too strong a body to admit of an experiment involving personal conflict. The domestics and retainers of the gentleman whose treasury was menaced, were known to be incorruptible, and there was no river at hand to cover a retreat. Nevertheless, the booty to be gained being very considerable, the dacoits came to the resolution of making an attempt on it.

The first point was to gain access to the house, upon some pretext, which would enable the spy to obtain all the information necessary for the furtherance of the scheme. The convenient disguise of a fakeer gave one of the gang an opportunity of becoming acquainted with some of the under servants, and he discovered that the sahib was fond of dogs.

The object of this person having been obtained, he withdrew to make his report, and returning subsequently, took possession of an old religious edifice which had for long been abandoned and fallen into decay. This was conveniently situated for the purpose, near the angle of the collector's mansion, a large pukka house, having a spacious garden in the rear, well stocked with trees, and divided by an unfrequented lane from the patch of jungle in which the temple before mentioned had been erected.

Soon afterwards, a man, attended by two followers presented himself at the collectors door, with several handsome dogs for sale; one or two of Persian breed, and others belonging to the hill districts. There was one in particular, superior to all the others; but on enquiry, this was not to be disposed of.

The collector at first entrusted the negotiation of the purchase to his head servant; but finding that the affair did not progress, he determined to take the management upon himself, and directed the dog-fancier to be conducted into his presence. The fellow played his part remarkably well; he was all anxiety

to oblige his patron, holding out hopes that his scruples would be overcome, but he was under the influence of a vow, and had been threatened with ill luck if he consented to part with the dog before a particular season.

Like many other English gentlemen, the collector fancied that he was most perfectly acquainted with the native character, and imagining that the man only desired to enhance the value of the dog, humoured him in the matter; and the consequence was, that he obtained admission every day, bringing the favourite animal to see its future master.

Upon these occasions, he often remained in waiting for some hours in the verandah of the house, and could see through the open windows and doors, a great deal of what was going on in the interior. The treasure chest he discovered was deposited in the collector's bed chamber; it was of iron, with three locks, and the keys were kept by the collector himself. These keys sometimes lay upon the table beside him; and one eventful day, the dog owner and his dogs being admitted to the presence of the sahib, the dacoit contrived that one of them should upset the hookah. In the confusion that ensued, he took the impressions of the keys in wax, unperceived, and concealed them about his person. Half of the affair was now accomplished, for keys were soon constructed by the ingenious artificers employed to make them. It now remained to fix upon the period for the concluding portion of the scheme, and to take measures for the purpose.

It happened that a grand entertainment was to be given at the station during the period of a native religious festival, at which, as a matter of course, the Burra Sahib would be present, and would carry along with him a great number of his principal attendants. Feasting was the order everywhere; immense quantities of sweetmeats and rice—the latter a dainty in the part of the country where the scene was enacted—were brought into the compound, and every body was more or less engaged in the occupation of cooking or eating.

The whole of the space around the house was covered with groups of people, sitting round their fires, and enjoying themselves, either sleeping until the viands were ready, or in singing or telling stories. All the work within the house had been duly accomplished, the proper persons were at their proper places, and nothing was less thought of than a robbery.

In the interim, the dog merchant had contrived to secrete himself in the chamber with the chest, which he opened without difficulty, and taking out the canvas bags which contained the money, he deposited them for the present in a narrow staircase at the angle of the building. All the flat roofs in India are furnished with these back staircases, which lead to bathing rooms, and to the top of the house, communicating by postern doors with the outside.

When the bags were safely placed, the dacoit locked the chest, left everything as he had found it, and proceeded to carry off the spoil. This was effected in a very ingenious manner. At a distance of half a mile beyond the patch of jungle before mentioned, a travelling kafila had posted itself, with bullocks and hackeries, and between this group and the fakeer's habitation, a line of thieves was concealed.

The dog wallah and his followers were allowed to walk about the compound unsuspected, where they were indeed invited guests; the men of their cast belonging to the establishment having their feast as well as the rest. A quantity of duttoora, mingled with the food partaken of by these people soon rendered them incapable of being very observant, and the pollution of their employment obliging them to keep aloof from the more respectable persons of the household, they occupied the least distinguished quarter of the compound, and under the shadow of a large tree, the confederates were enabled to carry the bags to the temple of the fakeer.

Thence they passed from hand to hand along the line and quickly placed upon the hackeries in waiting to receive them; the fakeer and the pretended dog merchant taking their departure at the same time. By forced marches, a considerable distance was gained before the morning; the booty was then divided, and the party separated, each making the best of his way to the place of rendezvous in a distant province, beyond the Company's territories.

It was late on the following day before the discovery was made of the robbery committed on the treasure. The sweepers of the establishment had been too tipsy to find out that unfair means had been taken to stupefy them, and they woke from a long repose, unconscious of having been under the influence of a drug, so delicately administered as not to produce more than the desired consequences.

Everything appeared to be in its proper place, and when the chest was opened, its empty state made manifest, suspicion, in the first instance, fell upon the servants. It was not until they had undergone a rigid examination, and the dog merchant enquired for and missed, that a supposition of truth flashed upon the mind of the collector.

The country was then immediately roused, the public roads scoured, and intelligence despatched to all police stations; but the dacoits were already beyond the reach of pursuit; the plan had been concerted too long, and the measures too well taken, to admit of the possibility of failure, after the rupees had once been conveyed in safety beyond the walls of the compound.

The travellers who were arrested upon suspicion could give a good account of themselves, and nothing was found on their persons to justify detention

beyond a few hours; nor was it until a long time afterwards that the details of the robbery transpired, the story being one of many told in a distant gaol, as a clever exploit, in which he had been engaged, by a convict under sentence of death.

It is in this manner that such affairs, which are dexterously managed, become known, the perpetrators delighting in the relation of their share in such enterprises, and thus encouraging young beginners to pursue their career; circumstances which render the classification of prisoners very desirable.

The instances here detailed, of dacoity in the Upper Provinces, are nothing compared with the one which came before a public tribunal in 1821, in consequence of the audacity of a second attempt made in the same manner by the same parties.

It appears that a notorious fellow, the leader of gang-robbers in Oude, collected a party consisting of more than 250 persons, and assuming the character of a rajah going upon a pilgrimage, entered the Company's territories, attended by a retinue corresponding to his alleged rank.

Acting on good intelligence, the object in view was the seizure of a boat laden with treasure from Calcutta, and having on board 25,000 dollars in bags, and upwards of 2,600 rupees belonging to a mercantile house. This boat, it was afterwards ascertained, had been watched from Moorshedabad, a spy having been sent down to the water side, who asked so many questions relative to the guard, the arms they carried, and other particulars, as to excite suspicion, and he was consequently very unceremoniously dismissed.

The individual who had command of the boat felt always anxious to bring-to at night at some town or village, where he could obtain further security against attacks. Upon one occasion, he could not get in in consequence of the strength of the current, and was obliged to make the vessel fast for the night on a sandbank. During the day, two men and two women were observed sitting near the river, and one of the former being armed with a blunderbuss, attracted some attention; no idea of robbery was, however, connected with an appearance so common on the banks of the Ganges, and the people in the boat, though disappointed in their hopes of reaching the village, entertained no apprehension for their safety.

They were, notwithstanding, attacked at night, one of the armed peons being killed by a ball fired by the dacoits, and ten others wounded by swords and spears. The boat was then ransacked, and the property carried off. The robbery, which took place near the village of Mukra, in Behar, was immediately reported to the magistrates, but six weeks elapsed before any certain intelligence could be obtained respecting the perpetrators.

It was ascertained that on the night of the assault, a person calling himself a rajah, returning from a pilgrimage, had encamped with his followers, upwards of two hundred in number, under some trees near the village of Mukra, and that his passage through the country was made in a tumultuous and disorderly manner.

A spear-head, a Spanish dollar, and an empty canvas bag, with the seal of the chief of the mercantile house upon it, being found in the neighbourhood, connected the rajah's party with the outrage; but he succeeded in reaching his own home at Barautch, in Oudh, a wild place in the midst of jungles, where he was known as the leader of a gang of robbers.

In the course of his travels he had hired various persons, bearers, and burgundies, and these men, having accompanied him to the place of his abode, had become acquainted with his true character and mode of proceeding. This intelligence was the result of much investigation and inquiry, and when the Government authorities had possessed themselves of sufficient evidence to sanction the proceedings, they took measures for the arrest of the delinquent, and called upon the officer in command at Secrora to assist in his apprehension.

A detachment of sepoys was in consequence despatched for the performance of this duty, having with them the people who had given the information and who could identify the robbers. The country, however, proved to be of so difficult a nature, and the dacoits, who were well acquainted with it, taking advantage of every dangerous pass to harass and cut off the soldiers, that they ultimately returned to cantonments without effecting their object.

They succeeded, fortunately, in obtaining intelligence which proved of great importance, and which was partly the occasion of the abandonment of their pursuit for the present, having ascertained that Mihrban, the pretended rajah and several inferior chiefs, were at the time engaged in a plundering expedition in distant provinces. It was well understood that he travelled under the pretence of going on a pilgrimage, and that he had a party with him dressed and disciplined like British sepoys.

The acting magistrate of Behar, Mr Smith, having made himself acquainted with various particulars relative to the person in question, instantly made arrangements for the purpose of taking him into custody. All the police officers were put on the alert, and intelligent persons were placed upon the roads to give the first intelligence of his approach. These measures were taken very cautiously, as upon any alarm there could be no doubt that the gang would disperse. The appearance of any strong force would have been quite sufficient to give timely notice of the intended seizure and therefore a stratagem was resorted to.

Persons in the confidence of the magistrate were instructed to join the party, and to employ their powers of persuasion to induce the pretended rajah to proceed to Gyah.

The magistrate at Shergotty was also prepared to arrest him at the first convenient opportunity. Some alarm was excited, and the robbers had reason to fear that their real character was beginning at least to be suspected; they therefore divided into two parties; Mihrban, accompanied by a few attendants, pushing on towards Gyah, and the rest remaining behind. He was suffered to proceed on his way unmolested, and the confederates, encouraged by this assurance followed upon his track.

On the arrival of Mihrban at Gyah, Mr Smith sent to enquire his name and the object of his journey. He replied that his name was Setaram, and that he was a zemindar from Barautch, in the territory of the King of Oudh, going on a pilgrimage with his followers.

Mr Smith then requested the pleasure of his company at the kutcheree; and upon his arrival, he was courteously received, and asked to take a chair. Being further questioned, he denied having been in the Company's provinces the preceding year; but was rather confounded at the introduction of a barber, who was desired to take off the stockings of the rajah, and see whether there was not some deformity in the foot occasioned by the distortion of the toes.

The display of the foot was fatal to the allegations of the pretended rajah, who, having upon his former excursion employed the self-same barber to shave his beard and pare his nails was now identified beyond all dispute. He still, however, persisted in his denial of all participation in the former pilgrimage, but gave evasive and unsatisfactory answers, and was finally committed to prison on a charge of having been engaged in robbery and murder, with 163 of his followers.

These people travelled in very good style, having beasts of burden and vehicles of various descriptions with them, together with forty women belonging to the chief's zenana, or the companions of his retainers. They were induced to return to the banks of the Ganges in consequence of having received intelligence of another boat laden with treasure coming up the river; and to pass off the better in the character which the chief endeavoured to support, he had engaged a man, formally of the Company's military service, to drill some of his followers after the manner of British sepoys, which would lead people of the country to suppose he travelled with a guard granted by the British authorities for the purpose.

The women, though taken into custody, were not subjected to very close confinement; at least they were permitted to remain together, and the

attachment they felt towards Mihrban, and their anxiety to assist in an endeavour to effect his escape, led to a very romantic incident.

Contriving, by means well understood in Indian prisons, to communicate with their friend, a plan was laid by which it was hoped that Mihrban would succeed in clearing the wall of the gaol; a rope was wanted for the purpose of affording additional facility to this mode of escape, it being unprocurable by any other means, the women proposed a sacrifice—the greatest, perhaps, short of life, that an Indian female can make; they agreed to cut off their hair, and manufactured a rope with these materials, which proved long and thick enough for the purpose.

The vigilance, however, of the people in the Government employ detected the scheme, and the rope fell into the hands of Mr Smith, the magistrate, who has retained it in his possession, as a memorial of the affection and fidelity of the brigand's wives. These women were of course well-acquainted with the nature and objects of the expedition which they accompanied, and were in consequence sentenced to a short confinement. Mihrban was capitally convicted, and suffered the utmost penalty of the law; some of his followers were sent to work upon the roads, others transported to distant parts of the country, and the remainder punished less severely.

Jewels are as much objects of plunder in India as in Europe; many women and children are murdered for the sake of their ornaments, and dexterity and violence are resorted to, according to the circumstances of the case, in order to possess the booty.

It is related, on the authority of the thieves themselves, that, upon one occasion, they succeeded in pillaging the zenana of a wealthy omrah. He was a very pious Syed, and his wives, partaking of his religious sentiments, were in the habit of assuming the garb of fakeernees during the celebration of the Mohurrum. All their jewels were of course laid aside, and how to get at them became the question.

Not being able to effect any thing in such an affair without the assistance of a female coadjutor, the dacoits discovered, in the person of an old woman, a pretended saint, high in favour with the ladies, an instrument fitted to their purpose. The hypocrisy of this impostor had not been rewarded in proportion to the disagreeable nature of the austerities she was obliged to practise; and disappointed in her expectations of more liberal presents, she agreed to assist in the designs of the dacoits, upon condition of sharing the spoil.

She knew where the jewels were deposited, and the lady of the mansion having determined to set up an imambaarah in her apartment, she was engaged to superintend the ceremonies, recite the poem composed for the

occasion, and hire the persons who were to act as mourners. The female apartments had been cleared for the reception of the company, and the coffers containing the jewels placed in an inner chamber, which was totally dark, and employed only as a place of security for the valuables belonging to the house.

A great many ladies and their attendants had been invited to attend on this occasion, and all were more or less in disguise. The zeal of some amongst them had induced them to smear themselves with chalk and ashes, instead of the more agreeable substitute of a perfumed powder; therefore, the appearance of the old woman's assistants was not so remarkable as it might have otherwise been.

No dacoit can attain any thing like proficiency in his trade unless he can paint his body so as to obtain a perfect disguise, and assume any character. There was no difficulty in passing off half a dozen of the banditti as women, who were introduced without the slightest suspicion by their conductress.

A house in which an imambaarah is set up is crowded with all kinds of ornamental appendages, and the dacoits, well instructed, threaded their way through, and established themselves at the door to the treasure chamber. It was fastened in a way very unusual in India, with a padlock attached to an iron staple being fixed in the wooden threshold or door-case. Nothing was more easy than to open this while squatted down in a group upon the floor, or for one of the party to creep inside, while the whole of the assembly were beating their breasts and tearing their hair for Houssein and Hossain.

A light was instantaneously procured, and the coffer soon despoiled of its treasures, which were concealed in the garments of the party outside. The door was rendered to all appearance entire, and the day's celebration having ended, the dacoits retired with their booty.

The old woman absconded, but the dacoits remained in the vicinity, for they were quite certain that it would be impossible to identify them with the devotees who had attended the Mohurrum.

A well organised gang of dacoits have always people in their pay belonging to great men, and even the courts of princes, to give them intelligence of circumstances by which they may hope to benefit. In fact, so dexterously do they contrive to extract information, that in many instances they are assisted by persons who gain no advantage from their connection with the thieves, but who are compelled, either by fear, or some equally strong influence, to aid and abet them in all their designs. Thus it is very difficult to discover the real instigators and perpetrators of offences; the most guilty individuals frequently contrive to elude detection, while their dupes and instruments suffer condign

punishment. To such perfection has the system of dacoity been carried in India, that the adepts run a long course of crime, undetected in the greater number of cases, and unpunished for all, until at length they may be safely lodged in gaol, and detained their upon a score of bad characters, without the possibility of bringing a specific charge home.

Medical men belonging to the Company's service, who become popular while engaged in visiting the prisons, are often amused with the adventures of noted detenus; while those who obtain their pardon, on becoming approvers, have no sort of hesitation in recounting the deeds of their past lives. However extraordinary and even melodramatic some of their narratives may appear to the English reader, accustomed to a very different state of society, there is in reality nothing to throw discredit upon the statements made by these persons of scenes in which they have been engaged. In native states, dacoits have less danger to encounter from the vigilance of the police, either in the prevention of crime or the apprehension of criminals, while the punishments are more summary and more severe.

A large gang of dacoits, who had for a long time infested the central provinces, obtained information of a marriage between parties of wealth and distinction, living at a considerable distance from each other. The wedding presents, prepared by the groom for the bride, were reported to be sumptuous beyond description, consisting of gold and silver stuffs, and brocades, shawls of price, and jewels of great value.

Such an account inflamed the imaginations of the thieves, and rendered them wild to obtain possession of a prize worthy of any risk. The difficulty of attainment could only suffice to sharpen the wits of the more experienced, and they resolved to make the attempt. There could be no doubt that gifts so valuable would be guarded in a suitable manner, and accompanied by a retinue fitted for the occasion. The dacoits, therefore, were not surprised to hear that a large party of the bridegroom's friends and attendants, well armed and of high courage, would conduct the presents to the bride.

Such a circumstance was to be expected, and though the difficulties would no doubt be very great, it by no means followed that they would be insurmountable. The dacoits knew the exact time the party would quite their place of residence, the route they would pursue, and the number of days they would consume on the road. They reconnoitred the country to be passed through, and fixed on a spot best suited to their purpose. It was not their intention to steal upon the party at night, as, in those intermediate places between town and villages where an encampment must be made, a sufficient number of sentinels would be posted to prevent surprise.

The scene of the intended attack was in a small plain, or rather open space, surrounded on all sides with jungle, the road emerging through a rather narrow defile at one extremity, and being cut through with a thick wood at the other. The jungle was broken into ravines, and intersected by deep gullies or water courses, overgrown with underwood.

Long before the bridal party had set out upon their journey, the dacoits had concealed themselves in the caves and dens which they found in the ravines, subsisting on game of all kinds peopling the otherwise desert place. The nearest village was at some miles distance; but, in furtherance of their scheme, they got acquainted with a simple fellow, a herdsman belonging to it, who had the care of a drove of buffaloes, and who they seduced to their haunt by the promise of good cheer, and by tales and stories such as the untutored rustic had never heard before. Every day he brought his buffaloes to graze in the place pointed out by his new friends, and where there happened to be some marshy ponds, in which they delighted.

A good lookout was kept for the approach of the expected cavalcade, and it was announced, on the very day calculated for its appearance, by some scouts despatched for the purpose. The small phalanx, compact and well armed, consisting of horsemen in advance, the main body, and rear guard, defiled into the plain, and no sooner had they gained the centre than an explosion took place under the feet of the horses, and at the same instant, a drove of buffaloes, with their tails and horns apparently on fire, dashed in amongst the astonished group.

The horses reared and plunged, and set off at full speed; the pedestrians were upset, and, in danger of being trampled upon by the infuriated buffaloes, thought of nothing but saving their lives. The vehicles were overturned, and an incessant discharge of gunpowder, in the shape of squibs, crackers, running fire, and shells, being kept up by some of the confederates, the others seized the valuables, and made off with them to their retreats, where the poor herdsman, more dead than alive, was bound hand and foot.

By the time the dispersed cavalcade had recovered themselves, the horses which had thrown their riders had been caught, and the prostrate men put upon their legs again, no one felt inclined to pursue the robbers through the intricacies of the jungle. The discomfited bearers of the presents were, therefore, compelled to turn back to report their misadventure, and to wonder how they could have been surprised. Not a gun was fired or a sword drawn; and though in reality the consternation had been so well got up, that no persons unprepared for it could have prevented the panic that ensued, it told very unfortunately, the buffaloes being the principal performers.

Asiatic Journal, September–December 1838

The Pindaris

Extract of a letter:

The chiefs of the Pindaris have quarrelled amongst themselves, and some of them have made proposals to submit to the British Government, and declare that they only wish for our protection and countenance to attack their brethren, who will not give up their predatory mode of life.

Jay Singh, Chief of Ragoghur, has sent a vakeel to Colonel Adams, and requests to be protected from the vengeance of a higher power (Scindia) it is supposed, promising to destroy Seetoo and his partisans. This Seetoo appears to be much disliked and feared by the less powerful Pindari chieftains. One of them named Kurreem Khan, has made a solemn vow (so say our Hirkarahs) to destroy Seetoo, or to sacrifice his own life in the attempt; he has actually marched against him with a considerable force, of which 500 men are his kinsmen, and wholly devoted to his cause.

Seetoo some time ago got the family of Kurreem Khan into his possession, who it is said to have divested himself of all the feelings of humanity, having attired himself in saffron robes, symbolical of eternal hate! Seetoo has left his cantonments at Sutwas, and has betaken himself to the jungles, supposed to be from dread of the fury of the exasperated Kurreem Khan.

From everything that is going on among the Pindaris, it appears that a little management will cause the confederacy, which has been so long the scourge of the adjacent countries, to fall to the ground. It will be long, however, before the inhabitants return to peaceful habits.

The subjects of the Berar Rajah along the banks of the Nerbudda, are to the full as hostile as the Pindaris themselves—and the Rajah's troops are perhaps more dissatisfied than either. When a Luhbur (plundering party) crossed the Nerbudda to make an incursion into the Company's territories, the inhabitants on this side soon increased its numbers by joining it; in this way a party, the original strength of which did not exceed 500 men, on arrival at the grand scene of action had been increased to many thousands; they; being generally joined by those whom they have plundered in their progress to the southward.

Formally the people on this side, who were inimical to the Pindaris, used frequently to rent up parties, returning laden with plunder, which they of course appropriated. But the Rajah's troops being poorly paid, and finding it the safer method of making themselves masters of the loot, take it from the

villagers in the name of the sovereign, who, agreeably to ancient usage, receives, or ought to receive the larger share.

No sooner do the inhabitants of a village overcome any small body of Pindaris than they receive a visit of congratulation from the nearest of the Sircar's troops, who very politely request to be paid the Rajah's share of the booty, they have gained; it is lucky if the unfortunate villagers retain their own property by giving up all which they had risked their lives to acquire.

A fisherman told me, that the people of the village had once succeeded in surprising a party which had just returned from Mirzapour from which they took a great deal of plunder; they, in consequence received a congratulatory visit, and those who had been so fortunate as to get a sword in the spoil, lost that and their own to boot. The poor fisherman, having taken some pieces of cloth, was in consequence robbed by the troops of every garment he had formally possessed.

Should this be an accurate description of the state of the country on the borders of the Nerbudda, where the hereditary robbers and cultivators of the soil mutually assail each other for the possession of the plunder; where the native governments are too weak to check the rapacity of their subjects, even if they did not benefit by the system of degradation which is pursued; there must be radical change indeed in the internal management of the several states which form the residence and homes of these unprincipled ruffians, before any advance can be expected in the progress of civilisation and humanity.

To a life of plunder and depredation they attach no disgrace or dishonour, and they cannot comprehend the nature of that policy, and those ties of more refined existence and moral obligation, which by imposing and securing the due observance of impartial law, consolidate the general good. Personal gratification or aggrandizement, by any means of stratagem, cruelty, or oppression, appears to be their sole aim.

"What a glorious place to pillage", said a chieftain who accompanied Sir John Malcom to see the wealth and wonders of Calcutta.

"How", said another, who had heard in astonishment the rigour of the English laws against these practices which his countrymen esteemed so innocent, "How if there is no plundering, do you support your numerous and war like population?"

Asiatic Journal, 1843

Sheikh Dulloo, the Pindarry

The establishment of a system of police throughout the British territories of India, which, though perhaps susceptible of improvement, is still tolerably efficient, renders any violent outbreak against the public peace comparatively rare. Restless and refractory spirits are, for the most part, kept in check, and compelled to seek more remote spheres for the scenes of their exploits; at least, this is the case throughout districts which were a few years ago kept in a constant state of disturbance. Bands of robbers have lately made their appearance, in considerable numbers, and with no small share of audacity, in Bengal; but, in the wilder parts of the Company's provinces, even the Bheels if not brought entirely under wholesome subjection, are far less turbulent and troublesome than at the first occupation of the country in their neighbourhood.

One of the most celebrated of the freebooters, of what may be called modern times—since he flourished in the memory of those civil and military officers who took possession of the districts of Candeish, ceded to the Company in 1818—was Sheikh Dulloo, of whose early history this much is known.

Like his still more famous counterpart, Robin Hood, he was driven from a high station at the court of a sovereign, whom he had long and faithfully served, by tyranny and injustice, which left him nothing, but his sword and an indomitable spirit of resistance. A Mohamedan, as his name denotes, he, on receiving some mortal injury from the Nizam of Hyderabad, withdrew from his service in disgust, and, joining the Pindarry chieftains, commenced those predatory incursions on surrounding territories, which compelled the British Government of India to despatch a strong force against a power growing too formidable to be put down by any ordinary means.

At the conclusion of these campaigns, and the total discomfiture of the Pindarries, Sheikh Dulloo, either excluded from the general amnesty by the continued persecution of the Nizam, or refusing to accept the terms offered, did not come in with the other chieftains. Withdrawing into Bheel country, and setting all proclamations at defiance, he continued the wild and lawless career to which he had become well accustomed, evading every attempt to surprise or apprehend him, and plundering every body who fell in his way.

So great was the terror he inspired, that he had only to establish himself in some strong pass in the neighbourhood of a city, to lay it under contribution. If the stipulated amount of money or provisions was not duly supplied, he murdered every human being who issued from the walls, and spread the roads with their dead bodies. He was of course obliged to confine himself to the towns belonging to native governments, while levying chout in this manner,

where it was thought more advisable to comply rather than resist; and where, according to the consolatory reflection, "What must be, must be", the lives sacrificed were disregarded by the survivors.

For a very considerable period, Sheikh Dulloo kept up a large establishment both of horse and foot, both receiving handsome pay. So great was his audacity, that in camping near some place of importance, he would send for the dancing girls from the city, and entertain his followers with feasting and nautches.

Meantime, his spies were abroad; there were many traitors within the walls who gave information, and he knew, in making some midnight sally, where to bend his steps with the certainty of procuring rich booty. The Sheikh's men fought desperately on these occasions, and it often happened that several were killed. It is said that, in more than one instance, when those severely wounded and left for dead contrived to rejoin him, he despatched them at once, lest they should embarrass his line of march.

The whole country rang with tales, true and false, of which he was the hero; and by these accounts it appears that he led a dissolute life, spending the wealth he procured at the price of human blood in every kind of feasting. He was not, however, destitute of some great and even noble qualities, if report speaks true; but in narrating the popular account of the hero of a hundred tales, it is impossible to vouch for any of them; the authority on which they rest being of a doubtful nature.

It is said that, in the zenith of his prosperity, recollections of former friendship intervened to prevent him from taking advantage of a favourable opportunity to secure rich spoil.

In early days, Dulloo had been intimately acquainted with a noble of the Deccan, whose sister, a very beautiful women, he sought as a bride; the negotiations between him and this lady were broken off, and she became the wife of a chieftain, who, in the distractions that ensued, and the cession of large districts at the conclusion of the Mahratta war, obtained the sovereignty of a considerable territory under the protection of the British Government.

The husband, dying, left an orphan boy as his successor, and immediately an intrigue was set on foot by the uncles of the heir, who though illegitimate, had contrived to make a strong party in their favour. The usual measures by which a youth, crossing the path of ambitious and unprincipled men, could be set aside, could not be resorted to on this occasion, on account the surveillance of the British Government. The malcontents, therefore, did not show themselves openly, while the vigilance of the boy's mother, who entertained a strong suspicion of their evil intentions, prevented him from being taken off by poison.

In this dilemma, they determined to have recourse to Sheikh Dulloo, who, though at some distance, they were well aware, could be induced to approach the neighbourhood, if the expectation of rich booty were held out to him. One of their confederates was despatched with intelligence which, reaching the ears of his followers, was speedily brought to the chief himself. The whole design of the conspirators was not communicated, it merely deemed sufficient to create a desire in the breast of the freebooter and his adherents to possess themselves of a prize.

Accordingly, it being reported that a small party of persons, having a considerable quantity of gold and jewels with them, would pass through a certain district at a certain time, Dulloo was on the alert, and posted himself and his followers at a convenient place. Meanwhile, it was proposed to the young prince that he should proceed to a fortress at some distance, for the purpose of enjoying the diversion of the chase; and not fearing any open attack, his mother consented, after having stipulated that she should accompany him herself, and name the whole of his attendants.

No objection was made to this arrangement, since it was in the interest of the conspirators that every incorruptible adherent of their intended victim should be included; and accordingly, with few exceptions, the party was composed of those persons of whom it was desirable to be rid.

No adventure occurred, until the travellers arrived at the place where Sheikh Dulloo and his followers were posted. He was at that time at the head of a very considerable body of picked men, armed to the teeth, and expert in the management of every offensive weapon. Showing themselves simultaneously upon all sides, the young prince and his party were surrounded, and there appeared to be no alternative but to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

At this moment, the name of "Sheikh Dulloo!" shouted out as the horsemen closed in, brought to the recollection of the Begum circumstances long forgotten, and in desperate hope that she might work on his feelings, she tore asunder the curtains of her palkee, and, reckless of the gaze of the contending parties, rushed forward to the chieftain's horse, and supplicated him to spare her son, for the sake of those whom he had once loved.

Sheikh Dulloo paused in amazement; a long period had elapsed since his heart had responded to any sentiment of compassion; all the affections of his nature were chilled, and he learned to look upon human suffering with a careless eye, and to be callous to every appeal to his humanity. The sight of the spoil now immediately within his grasp—the rich dresses, jewels, weapons, and baggage, belonging to the travellers—excited every avaricious feeling: he

had already calculated the extent of the prize, but he could not behold the noble and still beautiful woman who knelt at his feet, her veil thrown aside, her large eyes raised to his face, and eloquent in the midst of the tears shed for one whose life she held far dearer than her own. The words, too, that she uttered, recalled the memory of other and far happier days, when life and hope were young, and the prospect spread out before him, unshadowed by the cloud which had darkened over the latter years of his existence.

He restrained his followers with a signal, dismounted from his horse, and leading the lady aside, requested to know how he could befriend the sister of a much loved and long-deceased brother in arms. The Begum saw immediately that she had been betrayed into hands which had never been known to spare, and she told the sad story of her misfortunes and her wrongs, the design against her son's succession, and the triumph that awaited wicked men should their scheme be successful.

Dulloo listened, and many dark thoughts seemed to pass across his breast, but his better feelings triumphed in the end. He bade the lady to be of good cheer, gave orders that none of the party should be molested, and finally resolved to conduct them safely and honourably to the neighbourhood of some European station, where they could claim the protection of the British troops.

The princess and her attendants, almost despairing of their lives, would gladly have surrendered the whole of their property to the generous captor as a ransom, and endeavoured to induce him to accept presents of money and jewels; but he would take nothing. The feelings consequent upon the performance of a noble and generous action were his sole reward, and he could not be prevailed upon to barter sensations so rare, for gold.

Unhappily, he had become too notorious for any hope that his various offences could be overlooked, nor did the persons whom he had now benefited possess sufficient interest for the chance of procuring his pardon; he, therefore, had nothing to gain by his conduct save that self-applause which, perhaps, upon such an occasion, there are few persons who could deny themselves the gratification which it yields.

Sheikh Dulloo's followers were too well disciplined to dispute his behests; they consequently abstained from every act of aggression upon the persons or property of those whom they now guarded to a place of safety.

The noble chieftain had no second interview with the sister of his friend; the necessity of acting contrary to the manners and feelings of their religion and country no longer existed, and, respecting the sanctity of female retirement, he contented himself with sanding a daily message of enquiry.

When they parted, the grateful mother took a jewel from her person, and despatched it with an elegant message to the preserver of her son; while the young prince, in taking leave, shed many tears, and gave reiterated assurances of the warmest recollection of the services he had received; assurances which he afterwards proved to be sincere.

It was not Sheikh Dulloo's fortune to profit by the gratitude of the young men; they never met again, nor did he ever more behold the face of the lady who had once filled his youthful imagination, seen for the first and last time under such trying circumstances. To one of the robber chieftain's followers, however, this passage in the life of his master proved exceedingly fortunate.

Nujeeb Khan, notwithstanding his high-sounding name, had been compelled by the most abject poverty to take service under his present master, and was picked up from the road in a destitute and starving condition. Not having had many opportunities of adding to his pay and allowances, which were not on the highest scale, his appearance, as far as clothes and accoutrements went, was not equal to that of his companions; but he was far superior to the greater number in the lineaments of his person, while in strength, activity and grace, he was second to none.

Most of Sheikh Dulloo's followers affected side-arms, and possessed either clumsy pistols or matchlocks; but Nujeeb Khan could only boast a bow of buffalo's horn of an enormous length, and a quiver of painted arrows. With these, however, he did good service; nothing came amiss to him, from a buffalo to a pigeon; his aim was unerring, and either large or small game fell pierced with a mortal wound.

The young prince felt himself under a particular obligation to Nujeeb Khan, for, while in the very act of being dragged off his horse by a trooper, the less bloodthirsty follower, perceiving a relenting air in the manner in which Sheikh Dulloo received the supplications of the lady, stayed the arm of the destroyer, and in another moment the chief had given the word to spare.

Subsequently, Nujeeb Khan's dexterity with his bow and arrows attracted the attention of the youth just arrived at the age to admire and appreciate skill in the management of a difficult weapon; and he was never tired in witnessing exploits which he endeavoured to imitate. In parting, he told Nujeeb Khan, that if ever circumstances should bring them together again, in him he should always find a friend; but several years elapsed before the adventurer could profit by this kind assurance.

Sheikh Dulloo retired into a remote part of Caneish, and his followers, separated from him in a foray, and left wounded on the road, made his way to Rajpootana, and after undergoing a series of vicissitudes foreign to the

present subject, found himself a stranger, not over stocked with money, in a city of the Deccan.

Lounging one morning in the market place, he saw his old acquaintance, the prince, who happened then to be on his way from a distant journey, and a temporary residence at the palace, attended by a numerous retinue. He made a salaam, but was not recognised, and discovering that the great man's servants would not permit him to approach their master, he bethought himself of the means of attracting his attention.

Accordingly, he purchased a pair of pigeons, and, the next day, loosing these as the prince passed through the square of the chawk, let fly an arrow which, piercing both, brought them to the ground. The assembled crowd applauded the feat, and the prince, who had witnessed it, instantly called to mind the expert follower of Sheikh Dulloo, turned his eyes towards the archer, with an intention of giving him some gratuity for his adroitness.

Nujeeb Khan salaamed, and, in a moment, his countenance became familiar to his old acquaintance, who beckoned him to approach, acknowledged him as a friend, and finally took him into his service. Nujeeb Khan arrived at great eminence at the court of his new master, for in India, and indeed all Asiatic countries, few of the most awkward circumstances of previous life operate disadvantageously when opportunities for advancement offer; and the trifling incidents, relative to the new favourite's connexion with a noted robber, were not worth thinking about.

After the adventure already related, Sheikh Dulloo established himself for a time in a small fort in a secluded part of Candeish, transporting the wealth and valuables he had gathered to this stronghold. He respected the lives and property of the neighbouring villagers, to whom his residence amongst them was rather an advantage, since he and his followers spent their money freely in the purchase of such articles as they had to dispose of; but though tolerably secure for a time, the chief always lived in fear of the treachery of those about him. When on the march, in making predatory incursions, he never occupied the same bivouac, but, reconnoitring the ground previously, withdrew silent and alone, sometimes taking refuge in a hollow tree at others roosting in its branches, or digging for himself a cavity in the jungle, where, covered with brushwood, he could remain concealed; the wild beasts of the forest being to him less dangerous than his human companions.

There was something superstitious in the awe with which the people in his service regarded him, and they believed that some protecting power rendered him invisible at night, for he took great care that they should not know how he disposed of himself. Though exposing his life continually, while

shots were flying and sabres gleaming, as yet he had remained unharmed; and they felt assured that he was both ball and sabre proof. This notion contributed to his security, and he encouraged it to the utmost.

The chieftain's horse shared in the celebrity of its master, and was supposed to be no common animal, no human being ever having, it was said, succeeded in mounting her, save Sheikh Dulloo himself, who was obliged to mutter some incantation in order to quiet her whenever grooming was carried on by another.

The *diablerie* attributed to both horse and rider seemed the most obvious way of accounting for the extraordinary things achieved. Dulloo, in the wild and wandering life he had led for thirty years, had become acquainted with every hole and corner throughout the whole range of his excursions, and could, in consequence, evade pursuit when escape was deemed impossible.

At one time, he vanished from the sight of a large party, who were certain of taking him alive, penetrating, as it were the solid face of a mountain. No path, no hiding place could be discovered; no trace of footsteps; but he had found a way which led him to a secure retreat, and baffled every attempt of his enemies to follow on the track.

At another time, being hotly pursued by a very considerable body of mounted troopers, he kept ahead until he came to the river Taptee, which foamed and boiled with fearful noise amongst the rocks, and then, still at full speed, plunged on his favourite mare into the surging torrent, and, though lost to view, succeeded in gaining the opposite shore.

He must often have slept when mounted upon this sagacious and faithful creature, who carried him in perfect safety when the guiding reins relaxed; for on some occasions he could have had no other opportunity of obtaining needful rest. Compelled to be on the alert all night, he was wont to show himself, when danger threatened, in some part or another of his encampment (which was not formed until after dark), during the whole period in which his followers slept.

The story of this remarkable man, in fact, seems to be only a new and Asiatic version of that of Robin Hood and [Dick] Turpin rolled together, so similar are the adventures recorded; yet nevertheless, all are founded on circumstances which really occurred to this noted personage, and are told by men who never hear of either of his celebrated predecessors.

Sheikh Dulloo, it is said, at one time felt an earnest desire to visit the home of his youth, and his exchequer being rather low, he determined, if possible, to recruit it from the treasures of those who had become more the more fortunate possessors of all he had lost, and perchance prized too late.

The scheme was rather difficult of accomplishment, for the house, or rather the palace, for it merited that appellation, stood at a short distance from the high-road between Poonah and Hyderabad. Though most beautiful in itself, forming a perfect oasis in the desert, the country around was of a dreary character, and so far favourable to the design of the marauder.

Taking a very considerable detour, it was not difficult, on approaching the place of destination, to avoid the notice of the few inhabitants, the country being sterile and unproductive. Marching by night through ravines and unfrequented passes, these solitary places formed the halt for that day's rest; the horses were content with the scanty herbage which could be gathered for them and the small allowance of provender they carried; while the men husbanded their provisions, indulging only in tobacco, and occasionally enjoying a feast when a buck or elk fell into their hands.

In this manner Sheikh Dulloo and his party reached a range of dark brown hills, totally devoid of vegetation, which rose abruptly from the plain on the other side. What a scene did the summit of one of the passes disclose! Fields rich with cultivation, skirted by woods of mango and tamarind trees, while tall cypresses and magnificent cedars arose here and there on the borders of a widely spreading lake, dotted with small islands, and alive with numerous birds; flocks of wild ducks and water-hens disporting on its surface, or now yielding to the more majestic pelican; while the heron, the sarus, and the flamingo, watched upon the banks, their plumage brightening in the sun.

On the borders of this lake, backed by a garden full of orange and citron trees, stood the palace wherein Dulloo first saw the light. Time had not despoiled a single ornament. It was a long low building, consisting of two stories, surrounding an inner and outer quadrangle, and having an arched corridor or cloister running all round.

Who shall say what were the sensations of the robber, as he surveyed the scene, so tranquil, so unchanged, while, with branded name, a hand dyed with blood, a heart seared with crime, and a price set on his head, he looked upon the haunts of his early childhood, and thought of what he was and what he had been made?

Hardened, indeed must have been the breast which could not be melted and filled with soft emotions at such a sight; but if Sheikh Dulloo abandoned his soul to tender recollections of the past, they speedily gave way to sterner feelings. He had receive intelligence that the man who, in high favour with his sovereign, now annexed the enchanting tract of ground before him to already extensive possessions, had accumulated considerable treasure, which was lodged in his summer palace.

The period was one of profound peace. Sheikh Dulloo had come silently and secretly from afar, and his name, though still very formidable, had not for many years been heard in the territory from which he had been long exiled. Consequently, although to all appearance sufficiently guarded, the place was not prepared to sustain an attack made suddenly in the middle of the night. From his bivouac in the hills, the robber could see that there were numerous armed retainers lounging about the walls, and he resolved, previously to the attack, to go down in person to reconnoitre.

Disguising himself, therefore, as a vender of oils and essences, he approached the mansion, and found it, as he had suspected, filled with a crowd of idlers. The more martial spirits, for want of some better occupation, were amusing themselves with tilting with their spears against each other, and nothing appeared to be less thought of than fighting in good earnest. Well acquainted with every avenue to the house, and perceiving that no alteration had been made during his long absence, Sheikh Dulloo returned to his encampment.

He had purposely chosen a moonless night for the attack, and after the brief twilight had disappeared, the darkness was profound. Orders were given to "strike and spare not", for it was necessary to cripple the adversary so completely as to prevent pursuit, since, if once permitted to recover from their surprise and rally, Dulloo apprehended that his followers, hardy and determined as they were, would scarcely be successful against these Mahratta lances: fellows who had seen good service in the field, and were a match either for Moslem or Rajpoot.

Arriving at the foot of the hill, the robbers, sending a small advance guard of picked men forward, who were directed to seize all stragglers, watchers in the fields, and every person who could give an alarm, commenced their march silently, and with all the circumspection their profession had taught them. They proceeded on foot, leaving their horses behind in the encampment, as they had resolved to mount themselves on the Mahratta chargers, which were stabled and picketed at the palace.

The garden, which has been before mentioned, was very extensive; Sheikh Dulloo made for a remote angle, flanked by a tower, and having a postern door, which, though strong, was easily forced by the party brought against it. It had not been thought necessary to post sentries along the walls, and therefore the freebooter effected an entrance unperceived. They had despatched another party to make an attack in front, and sending up a rocket as a signal, the whole band burst with wild cries upon the astonished inmates, who for the most part awoke from their slumbers only to close their eyes again in death.

While the greater number were engaged in the work of slaughter, Dulloo and a few picked men seized the silver vessels with which the interior was well supplied, the ornaments of the women and all the money they could find. Some sharp fighting took place in the courtyard, but the surprise was too complete to admit of effectual resistance; the guard had been overpowered by the force of numbers, and men hastily aroused, unaware of the strength of their assailants, and having no time to equip themselves with their accustomed weapons, could do little against a well organized system of attack.

Dulloo, therefore, soon became master of the field, and having, in pursuance of a necessary but cruel policy, put numbers to death in cold blood, he was only prevented from firing the walls by an apprehension that so extensive a conflagration might rouse the country, and point out the line of his retreat.

Saddling the horses, therefore, and making themselves masters of every efficient beast of burden, the robbers departed, loaded with booty. They reached their encampment by day-break, and avoiding the public roads, and taking every precaution consistent with the speed with which they travelled, the whole body, in an incredible short period, retraced their steps, and reached their almost inaccessible haunt in Candeish in safety.

This exploit rendered Sheikh Dulloo's name more terrible than ever; it also served to revive the recollection of all his former atrocities, and to create an earnest desire for his arrest. So strongly was public indignation aroused, and so widely had the alarm spread, that a repetition of an enterprise upon an equally extensive scale became too hazardous to be attempted.

Dulloo's best followers fell off, partly from want of employment and partly on account of the altered temper of their chieftain, who, always stern, had since the last recorded adventure become too capricious and tyrannical for endurance. It was still in his power to raise any number of Bheels, but circumstances prevented him from availing himself of their services to any great extent. Candeish was becoming more settled; a European station had been established, and an active, zealous, and judicious British officer appointed to fulfil the functions of collector of the revenue, and magistrate and judge, both civil and criminal.

In consequence of the efforts of this gentleman, which were unceasingly directed to the preservation of the public peace, the province, heretofore in a continual state of alarm and disturbance, became gradually tranquillized. The unfortunate inhabitants had for a long series of years been preyed upon by spoilers of every kind—domestic harpies in the shape of Government officers, and gang robbers—who seized everything they were strong enough to keep.

He first directed his attention to the correction of the numerous abuses amongst the native servants of the collectorship, and he then set seriously to work to reclaim the predatory tribes who had so long molested the industrious classes. Many of the more turbulent spirits were, in accordance with a policy which has always been found to answer in India, offered service in the military and police departments, and thus enlist in the maintenance of order which they had been accustomed to disturb.

Others were induced to settle quietly down as cultivators, while the refractory were made to feel the power and extended grasp of the law. The gaols were filled with prisoners, and the roads scoured by detachments of soldiers and military police.

Sheikh Dulloo's mud fortress, wild and difficult of access as it was, became untenable under the new order of things. He was compelled to abandon it, and seek refuge in deeper solitudes and wilder fastnesses, only occasionally showing himself; but when he did make his appearance, he was as terrible as ever. Either the liberality of his dealings, or the awe inspired by his name, had hitherto secured the fidelity of the villagers in whose neighbourhood he was known to be; but he received intelligence that the kotwal of a township, with whom he had been on good terms, was actively engaged in an endeavour to secure his person.

This man, one morning, receiving a summons from a friend, and unsuspicious of any danger went outside the walls to meet him. To his surprise and consternation he encountered the well known and much dreaded Sheikh Dulloo, who reproached him for his baseness and ingratitude, and cut him to pieces on the spot, in the presence of others, who were, however, too weak and too much frightened to assist either in the rescue of the victim or the pursuit of his assassin.

This murder caused a great sensation; it showed that the robber was cognizant of every project formed against him, and that he was still in a condition to punish those who ventured to provoke his vengeance, by joining the ranks of his enemies.

At another time, the chief appeared upon the scene in a manner more worthy of his better days. He was at the head of a small party of horsemen, and suddenly came into contact with a body of soldiers in the service of a native prince, who, immediately recognizing Dulloo, commenced an attack. The foremost of the assailants levelled his musket at the redoubled chieftain, and fired. Dulloo fell down upon the saddle, apparently mortally wounded, and the enemy rushed to seize the bridle-rein, but was instantly cleft in two by an arm that never had yet failed, and a sabre that cut through anything.

The sight of their comrade lying bleeding and mangled on the ground, cast a damp upon many who, a moment before, had felt sure of victory.

Sheikh Dulloo followed up his advantage, and after a short and sharp contest, left several of his adversaries dead upon the field, and made good his retreat unhurt. This, perhaps, was one of the last occasions in which he had the opportunity of distinguishing himself, for every day rendered him less able to cope with the powers employed against him. No longer in a condition to maintain his accustomed retinue, and in continual apprehension of the treachery to which he always felt he was exposed, he now hurried from place to place, scarcely daring to rest for more than a few days anywhere, and seeing in the fate of many of his confederates the destiny which awaited himself.

It has been stated that, in all the scenes of his exploits—a pretty extensive range—a price had been put on Dulloo's head; the method usually taken in native states to secure punishment of offenders, since it saved all the idle formalities of a trial, and was the least expensive, as well as the least troublesome way of getting rid of a criminal.

When Candeish came under British occupation, a very considerable sum of money was offered for the apprehension of Sheikh Dulloo, and other notorious personages, his aiders and abettors; but this was a nice distinction, which was little understood by men accustomed to the old *regime*, and who considered themselves at full liberty to secure the outlaws in their own way —that is, by stealing upon them under the guise of friendship, and cutting their throats.

A companion of Dulloo, scarcely less celebrated than himself, and who upon the scattering of the band had done a great deal of business on his own account in Candeish, being hotly pressed, had taken refuge in one of the most difficult places in the Bheel country. Here he was visited by an old comrade, who managed to keep at large, and to conceal his participation in many offences which had rendered him equally worthy of the gallows. The less fortunate outlaw placed great confidence in this man, notwithstanding repeated warnings given to him by his wife, who, more truly reading his character, was uneasy at his visits, and distrustful of his fidelity. Not content with the society of the attached and faithful woman, who now cheerfully shared in every privation, the freebooter could not relinquish more congenial companionship.

The inhabitant of a wretched hut supplied with the conveniences of life, and only enjoying the luxuries of tobacco and arrack, when they were brought him by the single friend he had entrusted with the secret of his retreat, he

could not be persuaded to change his quarters, and encounter some equally desolate place the evils which the privation of these gratifications would entail. Female discernment, so often distrusted, and female advice, frequently so fatally neglected, would in this instance have averted the threatened danger.

The friend came as usual, and was received with the warmest welcome, and, producing the materials for a jollification, the night was spent in drinking and smoking, hearing news and telling old stories.

The wife, meanwhile, commanded to sleep, watched uneasily, until at length, sinking into a perturbed slumber, she was awakened by a heavy fall. Rousing herself, she saw her husband lying dead upon the ground, pieced by a mortal wound, and his assassin deliberately employed in cutting off his head. She was left in the hut with the mangled trunk of the man for whom she had abandoned everything, and whose death rendered her the most desolate of human beings.

The murderer, wrapping up the bleeding head, hastened with it to the European station, and being admitted to the officer in command, produced his ghastly testimonial of service, and demanded the reward.

Shocked at the sight, and unwilling to sanction proceedings of so barbarous a nature, the political agent, already mentioned as a military officer of the highest character, explained the precise meaning of the proclamation, and gave it as his opinion that neither the letter nor the spirit of it would warrant him in paying the price of blood.

This view of the case was very strongly combated on the part of the wretch, who had ruffian and common stabber written in every lineament of his face. He was a tall, powerful fellow, of horrid aspect, and rendered still more forbidding by the scarcely suppressed rage he felt at his disappointment. Every day he renewed his demand, and was resolutely refused until the decision of the British Government should be made known on the point in dispute.

Meanwhile, he was joined by several other desperadoes, as ill-looking as himself, who were continually waylaying the party by whom they felt aggrieved, and probably, had not the money eventually been paid, in consequence of directions to that effect from Bombay, the life of the political agent would have been attempted.

The difficulties, however, thus thrown in the way of reward for actions of so unprincipled a nature, and the evident feeling against them manifested on the part of the British authorities, tended to check the career of a set of villains, who would have been engaged in any treachery for the sake of

pecuniary reward. It was also found necessary to identify the heads by proofs not always easy of attainment; for although there might be no doubt of the fact of their having belonged to individuals denounced by the law, there were technical difficulties, unknown in native states, put in the way, partly to satisfy scruples which are inseparable from English legislation, and partly for the purpose of preventing a mode of proceeding so repugnant to the minds of men accustomed to give every delinquent the benefit of a trial.

Another of Sheikh Dulloo's friends was more fortunate. He was fairly apprehended, and lodged in the prison of the station. This was a large mud edifice, and, as it has before been mentioned, very well filled, numbers already convicted being incarcerated for the term of their imprisonment, and either strictly confined or sent to work on the roads during the day.

The young civil and military officers, who, when not employed in active service in the district, had very little to do, were fond of spending as much of their time as could be reconciled with their dignity in this prison; and a young civilian, especially, who had duties to perform connected with its management and discipline became very well acquainted with the most noted criminals.

Sheikh Dulloo was generally the hero in every tale, and both within and without the walls his exploits furnished an unceasing theme of exciting conversation. The freebooter, who, it has been stated, was compelled to take up his abode in this place of durance, proved a very amusing companion. He was a Brahmin, and had received a good education, which enabled him to bear his part in social intercourse with great success. After he had been an inmate for some time, upon opening the door of his apartment, it was discovered that the bird had flown. He left a letter addressed to his English friend, thanking him for the kindness and indulgence he had received at his hands, and eulogizing his conduct towards the unfortunate men who were kept in confinement; but adding, for his information and the benefit of the remaining prisoners, that the sirdar of the gaol was a great rascal, who cheated in every way, defrauding the convicts both in the quantity and quality of their provisions.

This man effected his escape by undermining the walls of the prison; being a Brahmin, and moreover, much esteemed by his fellow captives, those who were condemned to work on the roads contrived to conceal in their very scanty covering the portion of the earth which he had excavated during the night; thus enabling to carry on with his work without accumulations, which would have betrayed him to the scrutinizing eye of the gaoler.

Other and more daring attempts were made to break through this prison, which, being only constructed with mud, was not sufficiently strong to prevent an effort on the part of desperate men to force their passage through.

Upon some occasions, large numbers of Bheels assembled for the purpose of assisting their companions, and more than once a general engagement took place, the military and the police having some difficulty in maintaining the prison from assaults simultaneously made from within and without; nor could they effect their objective without much bloodshed, and the loss of many lives.

An incident occurred at this time, which showed that, in addition to the bands of robbers openly established, and sweeping over the country in search of plunder, these unhappy districts were infested with Thugs, who were perfectly distinct from other professional plunderers, and whose existence was not suspected, until the whole system having come to light, circumstances were recalled, which were passed over at the time without exciting much curiosity.

It appeared that, after the British authority established in Candeish had succeeded in restoring some sort of order, the thanadars, cotwals, and other conservators of the peace, were put on the alert. It chanced, one morning, that the cotwal of a village on the extreme edge of the district, having been unable to sleep, arose much earlier than usual, and went out of doors to inhale the fresh air. Greatly to his surprise, he perceived a party of strangers carrying bundles on their heads, who, even at an hour in which so few people were abroad, seemed desirous to elude observation.

Upon questioning them he found their answers to be evasive and unsatisfactory, and proceeding to open the bundles, he was surprised to find that they contained goods of a very rich description, silks and brocades, which, from their appearance, it was quite plain that they could not have come by honestly.

Summoning, therefore, the village burkundauzes to his aid, he arrested the whole band, who were signally unlucky in thus encountering the one man who was authorized to detain them, as another mile would have made them clear of the British territories. The party consisted of eight persons, who, being unable to give a good account of themselves, or the way in which they had gained possession of the goods, at headquarters, they were assigned to gaol.

Before their trial could come on, the prisoners, finding themselves strong and numerous and having the promise of assistance from friends outside, who came down in great force for the purpose of attack, determined on breaking through the walls.

Accordingly the attempt was made, and it was with some difficulty, and not without the loss of many lives, that the authorities were able to quell the disturbance and restore order. Upon this occasion, the persons apprehended upon suspicion of robbery were either killed, or so desperately wounded as to die afterwards. They were entire strangers in the place, and their history did not transpire.

Subsequently, it was ascertained that a company of travelling merchants, having with them bales of rich silk, similar to that found on the prisoners, had commenced a long journey, but never arrived at their place of destination; and calling all these circumstances to mind, those who were acquainted with them now have little doubt that the persons apprehended were part of a gang of Thugs, who, having divided the booty, were returning with their share to their own homes.

A new prison was shortly built of stone, too solid to be carried by any force that the lawless spirits of the neighbourhood could bring against it. Disturbances, therefore, inside the prison entirely ceased, and the country gradually became perfectly tranquil.

This was no field for the pursuits of Dulloo, who, crest-fallen and a fugitive, withdrew from all his accustomed haunts, leading a miserable outlawed life, continually in danger of being betrayed and taken, for the sake of the large reward which every native state held out for his arrest or assassination. But the good fortune, which had attended him for so long. befriended him to the last, and Sheikh Dulloo, though living a life of violence, died in peace.

Asiatic Journal, September–December 1838

Rahimdad, the Brahooe

A sketch from life

by Mrs Postans

One of the most remarkable-looking mountaineers I have seen, during my constant opportunities of observation on Belooches, Brahooes, and Afghans, is Rahimdad, the Brahhooe; and an incident in his life, related by himself, affords an amusing evidence of the notion my acquaintance has of private rights and moral responsibilities, and is characteristic also of the lawless habits of the mountain tribes in general.

Rahimdad, by birth a Brahhooe, is by naturė a wit, and by habit and education a plunderer of the most daring kind. He prides himself on being of Arab descent, and on holding lands bestowed on his ancestors as the price of blood. In accordance with the Brahooe customs, Rahimdad lives in a little black tent made of goats hair, and wanders about, like a careful shepherd, in the summer among the pasture grounds of Shawl and Moostung, while in the winter, he strolls away from the mountain snows to the mild climate of Gundava, in the plains, to enrich his granary with plunder from the peasants corn-fields, or amuse himself with chance intrigue.

There was something in the countenance and general bearing of Rahimdad, during our interview, that delineated his character very truly; his brilliant and radiant eyes now flashed with rage, now glittered with merriment, as the topics of discourse affected him. His white, close-set teeth were frequently displayed in his mirthful sallies, and an English belle might have envied the long glossy ringlets which fell over his broad and manly shoulders. His heavy dress, once white, was now of a drab colour, from long service; but in the embroideries of his many coloured *tosh-dans* (powder flasks, pouches, etc.), it was easy to see that Rahimdad loved finery, as well as that he was an eminent favourite with the fair Brahooe damsels.

He has strong passions, not always of the safest or purest kind. He loves his kaliun (Persian hookha) almost as well as he does his fleet-footed mare of Khorasan, and his neighbours property, perhaps better than either. In addition to his skill as a soldier and plunderer, Rahimdad is a capital *raconteur*, and a very bigoted Muslim, hating all 'feringees' with the full quota of hatred enjoined by the *Koran*, and never failing, among his companions, to spit on the ground in the most orthodox way, whenever the obnoxious 'tribe' are alluded to.

The excitement and insurrection, which occurred about twelve months since among the tribes of Moostung, led Rahimdad to fancy that more was to

be gained by joining the standard of the young Khan of Khelat, than by remaining in the plains and carrying off grain and cattle; so, one cool breezy morning, just as the bright sun was rising, and the flocks were going out to browse upon the thorny bushes, he mounted his chestnut mare, and, having previously arranged to the best effect its scarlet housings, hung a string of blue beads round its neck to keep off the evil eye, and swung his matchlock over his shoulder, he gave the animal two determined kicks with his bare heels, and started at a fast amble for the Gundava Pass. The stony nature of the ground, however, checked his pace as he neared the hills, so taking his kaliun from his saddle bags, he puffed away, and lounged along quite leisurely.

Being a man of observation, even in this desert tract, the very stones gave him matter for contemplation, but it was of a nature suited to his character and position, and took the following form: "*Inshallah t'allah!* I hope it may be", muttered he, looking steadily at the precipitous scarps and jagged rocks projecting half across the narrow path, and seeming to measure with a skilful eye their several proportions; "here would be a glorious spot for Kumal Khan and his men. If they crowned these heights and we could but get the feringees round this way, with their camels and treasure, and their little sepoys that I could carry in my arms, what *shikar* (sport) we would have among those dogs of infidels;" and involuntarily drawing round his matchlock, he lifted it like an experienced marksman for a moment to his eye, and dropping it again, continued: "Mihrab Khan was a good soldier, and had he not been a great fool, the feringees could never have got through the Bolan [Pass] even with their great chief sahib, and their crores of soldiers; Ha! ha! And yet that was a good saying of the khan's—and I liked him, although he did blow my brother, Dil Khan, from the mouth of a gun one day—'take care' said the Khan 'and don't go near the feringees Rahimdad. They are dogs, and, *Inshallah!* when we have passed through the waters of the Bolan, they will shake themselves after the manner of dogs; but go not near them, or the sprinkling will defile thee.'

Ha! Ha! That was good, and so it was, when Mihrab Khan sent his slave to cut off Meer Oolah's head, to save himself the trouble of listening to some prosy story the old fool came to tell him. Ah! He was a pleasant prince!" And Rahimdad, laughing at the notion of cutting off a mans head to escape being bored by a tedious visitor, knocked the ashes out of his chillum, and replaced it in his saddle bag.

Occupied with thoughts and reminiscences such as these, he journeyed slowly on, until his attention was attracted by a Belooche, who, well armed and mounted on a lank and bony tattoo, was wending his way towards the opening of the Pass. Rahimdad, having first proved the priming of his

matchlock, pressed the sides of his mare, overtook and swiftly passed the traveller. A few yards in advance, he wheeled round and approached the Belooche more leisurely. As he drew near, he perceived that a female, closely enveloped in a large *chudder*, or sheet, worn by Mohamedan women when abroad, was seated behind the traveller. "Ha!" thought Rahimdad, as he caught a glimpse of a pair of bright and handsome eyes, and a pretty little foot, undraped by the envious *chudder*, "what adventure is this? I must enquire into the matter."

"*Salaam aleikoum!*", was therefore, the friendly salutation given by Rahimdad, as he reined up his mare beside the starved looking pony of the Belooche.

"Are you well, brother?" he continued, using the common compliments of the Belooches; "are you *very* well? Are you quite *koosh* (comfortable)? Is all right with you? Is your heart rejoiced, and your mind at ease? Come let us travel together."

The Belooche would have excused himself, but he glanced at the Brahooe's high-bred mare, and thought of the three hundred rupees that were in his saddle bags, and being prudent as well as warlike, he immediately capped with all the courteousness the salutation of his companion, and proceeded to ask just as many civil questions as he had done, all of them meaning precisely the same thing, and wasting a vast deal of time.

Rahimdad then began to cross-examine the Belooche on the matters astir in his quarter, and heard that the tribe had lately captured some one hundred camels from a convoy, with some amount of money intended for the advanced army. The chat grew interesting; the particulars of the attack were all related, and it was not strange that the travellers grew friends apace, when their mutual sympathies were excited by such tales as these—tales of blood and plunder, and revenge!

During the progress of this conversation, however, Rahimdad ceased not to cast furtive glances at the bright-eyed girl clinging to his companion; and of her beauty Rahimdad saw quite enough to feel a powerful inclination to appropriate her to himself, as well as to make himself the master of the sword and matchlock of his new acquaintance, which he saw were of rare and cunning workmanship. He was fertile in expedients, and never did he mortify a fancy. No sooner, therefore, had he determined to obtain the lady and the arms, than he ingeniously commenced his work.

"*Inshallah!* you have been prosperous, my brother," he observed, taking a long whiff at his kaliun, and handing it to the Belooche; "but this damsel here, who is she? Women should be at the corn-mills."

The question did not please the Belooche, but he had already made too many disclosures to withhold this last; so Rahimdad drew from him that the girl was the bride of a rich cultivator, near Gundava, whom the Belooche was carrying off, after having plundered her family, burnt their village, and driven away their flocks; when, turning on his companion [Rahimdad] with flashing eyes and well-affected horror.

"Villain!" he exclaimed, "dare you tell me this? To provide yourself with grain was right; to possess yourself of flocks is good; but to seize a Mohamedan woman, and to travel with her in the light of day—to suffer her face to be seen by the eyes of men—this is shameless indeed ! You are little better than a feringee, and if suffered to live, would blacken all our faces!"

So saying, and before the miserable Belooche, encumbered as he was, could defend himself, Rahimdad had cut him down, and, having rifled his saddle bags, slung his sword and matchlock across the mare, and seating the girl behind him, calmly pursued his way to Moostung.

The rebellion headed by Nusseer Khan being then at its height, Rahimdad sent the girl to Shawl, where he visited her from time to time, plundering on the way wherever the opportunity was afforded him.

At length, wearying of his prize, Rahimdad began to consider what further advantage he could derive from the incident at the Pass, and his ingenuity suggested to him that he would do well to return her to her family, with a story of his own invention. It was necessary in the first place, however, to work on the girl's fears by threats of vengeance he would take did she betray him, and having bound her by an oath to state that he had gallantly rescued her from her Belooche ravisher, and treated her with all honour until a safe time arrived for her safe return, he sent her back to her husband, directing her to require that an annual present should be made to him of flocks, clothes, and money, as an acknowledgement of his merit and gallantry.

The terms were complied with, and Rahimdad still enjoys, from the gratitude of the deceived husband, and the excited terrors of his young wife, this reward of his own most ingenious villainy.

Such is the story of Rahimdad the Brahooe, and he relates it himself with the most animated satisfaction.

Upper Sindh. *Asiatic Journal,* May–August 1842

Thugs

"Our correspondent at Chittor has acquainted us, that a jogee [yogi: religious mendicant, a practitioner of yoga, a magician] has been apprehended in that zillah, who on examination had admitted his connection with the tribe [of Thugs], and confessed that he had taken an active part in many cases of Thuggee. It is certainly most strange how these people manage to keep their *metier* a secret.

Only a very few years since, the officer commanding a regiment in the Nizam's [of Hydrabad] service received an official communication, containing the description of a certain individual in his own corps, accused of being a Thug. The description was so precise, that the officer felt convinced that a particular havildar was the person to whom it referred, and such turned out to be the case. The havildar had been several years in the service, and had always borne a most excellent character."

Thugs in the South Mahratta country

A "sub-collector," in a letter in the *Bombay Gazette*, January 29 [1838], states that suspicions having been excited that a person, on the establishment of the sub-collectorate of Bagulcote, had been murdered by Thugs, Mr Alexander Shaw, the sub-collector, set on foot an investigation as to the existence of these assassins in this part, the result of which was, that above seven hundred persons had been missing in one year in the district without the possibility of accounting for their absconding.

The report was forwarded to the Sudder Adalut, and thence to the Government, but the Court of the Governor pronounced it a delusion; but since the Bengal Government have sent Thug agents in the districts Mr Shaw alluded to, they have gone far beyond Mr. Shaw's report; they have stated that "the Thugs have paved the country about the banks of the rivers Bheema and Khristna with skeletons."

Murder of an European by Thugs

The Bengal Hurkaru, March 12, [1842]

A Mr. Russell has been missed, in his progress from Culna, in Burdwan, towards the Upper Provinces, with money for some mercantile purposes, and a part of the palankeen and other property, known to have been in the possession of the missing gentleman, has been subsequently discovered, not

far from the Thannah of Agurdeep, on the banks of the river, some distance from Culna.

That murdered Mr. Russell was, there is no doubt, and that by natives, although his muscular power was such, as would have been supposed sufficient to daunt most who would have attempted to attack him; but it is generally believe that, as he expressed an intention, if he found the night warm, of sleeping in his palankeen, placed on the roof of the boat, he was taken unawares whilst in that position.

We owe it to the activity and perseverance of the authorities of the Burdwan, that this mysterious disappearance of an European gentleman has been traced to a party of Thugs, many of whom have, for a long time, had their haunts in the neighbourhood of Culna, and there is no doubt that Mr. Russell fell a victim to these cold-blooded murderers,—and it is, we believe, the first instance on record, in which the Thugs have presumed to indulge their blood-thirsty feelings at the cost of an European; and if a severe example be not made in the present instance, there is no knowing how many more may be destroyed; for, in the confidence with which we generally travel through the country, whether by dawk or by water, at all hours of the day and night, there can be no knowing how many may suffer.

We have frequently been informed of the existence of several gangs of Thugs, and their families, in the neighbourhood of Culna, and we cannot but regret that the measures in prosecution, for the extirpation of this fearful class of people, should have been so much relaxed as they appear to have been of late years in that division, consequent, it may be, on the frequent change of officers in the Thuggee-suppressing department."

Bankas and Swindlers

There are in Hindustan three descriptions of persons who answer in some respects to our dandy, and are called banka, which means bent, crooked or out-of-the-way. One consists of the inoffensive fop, or civil banka, whose whole heart is set upon fine array; another furnishes specimens of the military exquisite, or fighting banka; and the third includes every denomination of the bully, swindler and cheat.

The first is generally a rather silly or dissipated person, possessed of some property, which he squanders upon the finery wherewith he bedecks himself, greatly to the advantage of the *marchands des modes* of the place.

The second is a person of consequence in the armies belonging to the native states, and frequently a person of very high consideration, being

generally individuals serving in the body of *Ekha*, or free troops, who receive no pay, find and mount themselves, fulfil the duties of *aide-de-camp*, and are always ready for any desperate service. They are invariably expert swordsmen, or particularly skilful in the management of the spear, and accomplished in all the arts of horsemanship, while they are ever to be found anxious for an opportunity of trying their skill with their favourite weapon, either against friend or foe, all and every one who refuse to accept their superiority.

The banka who prides himself on the use of the sword, allows the ends of his turban to hang down his back, a style of costume which is very significant, intimating to all who may have any inclination to dispute his claim to pre-eminence that he is ready to fight with the sword in fell encounter with any daring individual who will venture to come forward, or who presumes to wear in his presence a turban of similar dimensions.

Should the banka be a spearman, if a Hindu, he sports an anklet of gold or silver on one of his legs; if a Mohamedan, a small band of bright coloured silk or cloth above the knee of his horses near the foreleg. These answer the same purpose as throwing the gauntlet, and are called *bana* (challenge). When the hostile armies of native princes approach each other, the bankas will gallop within hearing distance, and loudly challenge any one to come out and fight them with sword or spear.

Europeans generally have but a poor chance against the artful banka, though instances have occurred in which British officers have accepted these challenges, and of these, only two or three were known to ride off conquerors, [the two were] Dallas and Nairn.

On these occasions, the weapon was the sword. Dallas, it is said, fairly killed his opponent in more than one engagement. Nairn was considered the best swordsman in the army, and unrivalled in the management of his horse; the glories he gained in these encounters, however, were unfortunately tarnished by a painful dilemma, which obliged him to draw a pistol contrary to previous agreement.

The circumstances of the case were much canvassed at the time, and though his opponent had taken a very unfair advantage, many people were of the opinion that Major Nairn should not have had recourse to fire-arms. Lord Lake, in consequence of this misadventure, forbad the acceptance of banka challenges in future.

When the military banka has displayed his bravery in action, he is frequently appointed to some lucrative situation about the person of a chief whose cause he has espoused, and at the close of the campaign is often

rewarded by a liberal grant of land. Many of the independent principalities in India have been established by individuals who were originally bankas.

The military banka has always some part of his dress of an extravagant or out of the way fashion, either in respect to colour, texture, or form. Some will wear trousers, of which one leg is composed of red cloth and the other of green; individuals of this class occasionally going so far as to have one entire half of the *alkhalig*, or cloak of one colour, and the other half of a perfectly normal hue, in addition to the parti-coloured trousers, so that the profile presents two different personages.

These gentry are seldom seen in the Company's provinces, but they are plentiful in the Mahratta camps and the courts of independent princes. A specimen of the class in its greatest extreme was to be seen at Lucknow, in a Person who, in assuming a double character, carried the principal to a great extent by having his horse caparisoned in the same sort of style, the harness and housing being of different colours on the different sides. The Tartarian cow-tails, four of which ornamented each of the four corners of the saddle, were on the near side of his horse black, and on the off side white. The military banka is very proud of his arms, accoutrements, and horse, on which he expends all his spare cash. He will give any sum within the compass of his means for swords, daggers, spears, etc, of a superior description, and is always armed to the teeth. If rich enough to afford the expenditure, he will cover his horse with silver or silver-gilt harness, and his own dress, saddle-cloth and other accoutrements, with gold or silver lace, so that, to use one of their own expressions, they would, 'burn well'.

There was one worthy of this description who always appeared with a large god ring in his ear, covered with talismanic characters in Arabic. This ring was worth about twenty-five pounds, and its size rendered it very conspicuous. When asked why he wore such an ugly, heavy thing, by way of adornment, he replied that he placed it in his ear to reward the gallant swordsman who should cut off his head.

This person had, on one occasion, been despatched by Colonel Gardiner on a mission of some importance. Returning into camp, he found the ground he had to pass occupied by the enemies skirmishers; he was consequently compelled to fight his way through them, and in cutting a path for himself and his horse, it was proved that he had killed or wounded no fewer than seven of his assailants. This exploit obtained for him the *soubriquet* of 'cut throat Jack' among the officers of Gardiner's horse.

The military bankas are polite and polished in their address and conversation; indeed, the extravagant style of their complements and their

excessive courtesy, upon all occasions, would appear highly ridiculous to Europeans, though Asiatics consider the most flattering and florid speeches as marks of superior breeding, and judging entirely of a person by his outward behaviour and attention to minute points of etiquette, are of the opinion that 'manners make the man'.

The regiments of native irregular horse in the service of the Company afford specimens of the military banka, although the necessity of appearing in the uniform of the corps prevents the extravagant display of dress affected by men who are unfettered in this particular. The piping times of peace, which have succeeded to the more stirring adventures of former days, are inimical to the exhibitions of valour in single combat with the enemy. There are, however, various ways in which the banka can excel his companions in arms, either by his superior skill in horsemanship, or with the matchlock, the sword, or the spear, while running at a ring, or engaged at any of the tilts and other exercises for which the native troopers are famous.

These men regard with some degree of contempt the method of hog-hunting pursued by European gentlemen, which, although acknowledged to be a very dangerous sport, it is not sufficiently exciting enough for them. They employ the sword rather than the spear, and will pursue a hog, and, when he turns at bay, cut him down, for their swords will penetrate stance, and their strokes are unerring in their aim. They can teach their horses to do anything and endure anything, performing almost incredible feats with animals which they make their companions and friends.

These men it is well known, were by a wise arrangement added to the British force after the campaign against the Pindaris, when so many native establishments were broken up, and the tranquillity of the peaceful portion of the community could only be ensured by giving suitable employment to wild and warlike spirits, who would otherwise have been thrown loose upon the community.

The Pindari leaders were chiefly composed of bankas—men who dared everything to gain a name; for there are no Bobadils amongst them, these military knights-errant, if such they may be termed, being always ready to maintain their claims to the prowess they assert at the point of a sword.

Individuals belonging to the third class are never in a situation to afford to keep a horse. In the native armies, in which, when possessing a military turn, they frequently serve, they are attached to a peculiar branch, a regiment to which is given the extraordinary cognomen of shodha, literally, 'blackguard' or 'rascal'. The regiment thus distinguished is not entirely composed of bankas, only a few aspiring to that character, they being in fact pre-eminent, even in

their own corps of outcasts and scoundrels, for their vices and villainies. They ape as much as possible the external appearance of the true banka, but do not possess any of the good qualities to be found in those strange, eccentric, but often high minded persons.

The shodha regiments are composed of men privileged to a certain extent, being allowed to commit many crimes which in others would be visited with severe and summary punishment. In return for these indulgences, they are obliged to perform dangerous services comprising the duties of pioneers, to form the advanced guard, and to lead the forlorn hope at sieges, when a breech is considered practicable.

When not actually employed on service, they are allowed to have the entire command of their time and actions, going where they may think proper, and following their own inclination, committing all sorts of irregularities with impunity, being seldom brought to account except for some very heinous and audacious crime. As they receive little or no pay from the state by which they are employed, they are permitted to live upon the public, and to pick up a livelihood in any way that may present itself. They are great blusterers, bullies, and rogues; are adepts in every species of knavery, sticking at nothing that promises to forward their views, and are continually committing actions which in a better regulated state of society would bring them to the gallows.

Two of these gentry falling short of cash, agreed to raise the wind in a new and extraordinary manner. The rich Bunneas are fond of having an attendant of the Brahmin caste to prepare the flowers, grain etc, for the daily offering to the gods, as well as to cook food on certain occasions. Ascertaining that a Bunnea of great wealth required a Brahmin attendant, the eldest banka sold his comrade as a slave to the Bunnea for 200 rupees, assuring the purchaser that the individual thus offered was a Brahmin of high cast, but reduced in circumstances, and obliged to submit to slavery in order to liquidate a debt which he had no other means of discharging.

The newly purchased attendant was duly established in the family, superintending the daily poojah, or prayers, and cooking the food, and was, in the course of a few days, treated as if he were a relative or particular friend. He maintained the character he had assumed with great strictness and much satisfaction to his employer, until he felt assured that his confederate had proceeded a considerable distance, and was free from the danger of apprehension, and that consequently the 200 rupees were quite secure.

He then began to alter his demeanour, exhibiting in the first instance marks of disgust at his employment while picking the flowers for the daily poojah. Being well aware that he was under the cognizance of the females of

the family, he spat upon the ground—a mark of contempt certain to attract their observation.

They of course reported what they had seen to the master of the house, who became alarmed, and determined to watch the movements of the pretend Brahmin very narrowly. His doubts and apprehensions increased upon closer scrutiny, and he began to suspect that his slave, instead of a Brahmin was a follower of the Prophet.

This was dreadful; he had cooked the provisions for the daily meal, and every person in the house had partaken of this polluted food; the reputation and cast of the whole family were gone. To satisfy his own mind, without alarming the dependents, he called the supposed Brahman into a private room, mentioned what he and the ladies had observed, and concluded by saying that he suspected him of being of the Muslim religion.

The banka replied:

"By the oath of the Koran, I am not a Mohamedan;"

An answer which confirmed the Bunnea's suspicions. He immediately entreated the banka not to speak so loud, or his family would be ruined; adding, that the party who sold him was a rascal, and that he might follow his former master as soon as possible, as he should not remain in his house any longer.

The banka seeing that he had the vantage ground replied audaciously,

"It is easy for you to say that you desire me to follow my master, but how am I to do it, without means of travelling or money to purchase food for a single day? It is true that I am by birth a Mohamedan, but being a slave, I was compelled to do what my former master taught me. I performed the duties he enjoined with disgust, for I am a true disciple at heart; but I must live, and therefore shall not quit your service without some provision."

The old Bunnea became seriously alarmed, gave the rogue a handful of rupees, told him to mount a small pony which he was at liberty to keep, and urged him to employ his best endeavours to overtake his former master, for whose service he was so well fitted.

Asiatic Journal, September–December 1838

Chapter Two

Affray at Loodeeana

The *Bombay U. S. Gazette*, published a letter from Loodeeana, giving the following particulars of the affray at that place.

"About one o'clock a.m. on the 1st inst., a sepoy of Capt. Hyslop's company entered by the window of his sleeping room. Hyslop immediately awoke, and on perceiving a figure, asked who it was. No answer was, however, returned, and Hyslop, on seeing the fellow raising his musket through the window from the outside wall against which it was leaning, rushed out, and reached the wall of the compound before the rascal fired and missed him.

Hyslop then went over to Major Spens for his guard, and the major did accompany it over. During this time, the alarm had been given, and the native troopers were a little in advance of Major Spens party, and the villain fired; three balls passed the staff serjeant and entered the body of one of the native troopers, two passing clean through him, and one of these it was that struck Major Spens; it went through his thigh, and the other wounded a trooper in the hand; the murderer then made his escape.

The artillery, 50th and 74th, were ordered out at two a.m. and were under arms until muster parade at sun-rise, when all were drawn up, and the officers were standing opposite their regiments talking, until Brigadier Rich made his appearance.

Capt. Hyslop was relating his escape to the officers of his own corps, when suddenly, on looking up, he exclaimed, 'There is the man that shot at me, and ran off!"

Sure enough, there was the sepoy, with musket in hand, coming towards them, at eighty yards distance, and some of the officers retired.

Two, however, remained, and he came up to them; one of them advanced towards him, but the sepoys stopped him by bringing his musket ready, and saying, 'I don't wish to shoot you, sahib,' and, on the adjutant coming up, he

presented, and said the same; he then retreated behind his regiment, but in doing so, a fat havildar jumped on his back, and brought him to the ground.

He was secured instantly, and his musket taken from him; it was loaded with three balls, and the villain had a cartridge in his hand for fresh priming.

He is now a prisoner in the European guard. He is quite safe, but was under the influence of bhang [*Cannabis saliva* or *indica*, a hallucinogenic drug] at the time he attempted Hyslop's life.

The Court of Inquiry that was sitting to investigate the cause of the late disturbances between the 2nd light infantry battalion and the horse artillery finished their proceedings on the 15th, and the papers are to be forwarded to Government immediately.

The Mutiny at Secunderabad

An officer of the Madras army, writing to the Calcutta *Englishman* on the subject of the disturbances at Secunderabad, encloses a letter received by the commandant of the 4th Light Cavalry, (one of the regiments offending), which shows that there is no disaffection in the regiment, which has hitherto been as conspicuous for its loyalty and good feeling, as distinguished for its services in the field; among which latter the last glorious charge of the 'black nineteenth' at Assaye, is ranked; "and I fully believe", says the writer, "the feeling of this corps to be even now such, that they would volunteer for service in any part of the world where they might be required.

The difference between full batta and the revised rate of exchange leaves them considerable losers; added to which, the benefit of the difference of exchange between 11 and 12 per cent has, I am given to understand, been almost nullified, as regards the sepoys, from the sowcars having reduced the quantity of copper exchange for the rupee, which, from always being scarce, was sufficiently small originally.

I must not be understood as writing in any way to vindicate the conduct of these misguided men; I merely desire that the true cause of the bad feeling which has been raised may be made public as nearly as possible at the same time with the offence, and to show that want of loyalty, as regards willingness to serve the state, has no part in the transaction. At the same time, it is satisfactory to know that the carrying out of an unpalatable measure, which has been canvassed by the sepoys for a length of time as a questionable act of justice, is not sufficient to cause disaffection in the native troops concerned.

The native artillery received their pay, *minus* batta, and immediately fell in and were prepared to enforce (if required) the obedience of their brothers

in arms, who perchance had not been fortunate enough to have the enormity and disgrace of such conduct forcibly explained to them. Again the 1st regiment of Light Cavalry, which had been relieved by the 4th in consequence of the batta order, have to a man expressed their readiness to return to Secunderabad on half batta, should they be required to do so; and I have little doubt that many, if not most, of our other corps are ready to follow so good an example."

The writer of the letter enclosed says:

"I went over to Bolaram, and got permission to see them from Captain Bullock; the men were exceedingly glad to see me, and I reasoned and talked to them for a long time. Twelve of them begged me to take them out, and if I could not do it myself, to do all in my power in interceding for them. I think if they had an opportunity now, 200 would come back, and an act of mercy at this moment would bind those who have gone through fear and the force of example (not knowing the consequences), heart and soul to the service for life; but it appears that they will not be allowed to come back. It is most extraordinary, the men cannot even yet conceive that they have done wrong.

They say:

'We killed nobody—we robbed nobody; and what have we done? We only asked for our just rights; and what harm is there in that?'

The Government may call it mutiny, or whatever they choose, but not a native regiment understand that combination is a crime, and the sooner perhaps that it is fully impressed upon them the better.

Since writing the above, I have received certain information that every man will be glad to come back to their duty, and have begged of me to ask Captain Anderson to go out, and they will all come back. Captain Anderson has been to the general, and asked permission to go, but I am sorry to say that it has been refused; had he been allowed to go, it would have saved the regiment. I have just sent them paper to make out a petition, and every man to sign it. I hope it will succeed, poor fellows; for all they have done, I cannot help admiring them. The 7th Infantry say, though they have taken pay this month, the resident promised batta next, and they would not take pay without.

Secunderabad, 16th February

Since my last communication, everything has been going on quietly in the cantonment. The prisoners of the 32nd and 48th regiments N.I. were escorted hence towards Warrapilly on the 11th inst. On that morning, the horse and foot artillery were out with their guns, parading along the high road leading to the church and down the Madras road. The resident having provided for

the escort of the prisoners of the 4th Light Cavalry, they marched towards Warrapilly on the 13th inst.

On reaching Milkapore, they are to be made over to the custody of Captain Borradaile, 4th L.C., who is to assume command of the three companies of the 25th N.I., and proceed on. The families of the 4th L.C. have been permitted to accompany their relatives. The ringleaders of the 32nd regiment (nine privates) were brought to trial before a native general court martial, which assembled on the 12th. Their trials were concluded on the 14th. The court has been adjourned during the continuance of the Masherbrum [festival].

Eighteen troopers of the 4th Light Cavalry, prisoners, were escorted in from Mulkapore on the 14th, and confined in the main guard. It is supposed that these are the ringleaders and also from some of whom the trooper who had received pay had experience severe ill-treatment from the effects of which he is now a patient in hospital.

The Eastern Star, 22nd February 1842
Asiatic Journal, May–August 1842

A Tiger Hunt

"It is generally imagined," says Captain Forsyth in his remarkable work on hunting in Central India, "that it is sufficient to mount an elephant and go into the jungle where a tiger has been signalled, to be sure of finding him and killing him, but this is a profound mistake. Several hunters mounted on elephants, and beating in a line across the forest, may certainly meet with tigers in this way, and slaughter them, especially if aided by a line of native beaters. But there is no species of hunting in which a more thorough knowledge of the habits of the animal, or more perseverance and skill, are necessary than in the pursuit of a tiger with a single elephant."

"On entering the jungle for the first time, it is impossible to avoid experiencing a certain degree of trepidation, so complete is the persuasion that tigers will be seen at every step; and it is only after fruitlessly passing whole days in searching for them that the little danger these animals present in the jungle begins to be realised.

During the ten years I passed wandering on foot over the districts of Central India most infested by tigers, it only happened to me three times to meet with these animals when I was not seeking them. In fact, if we except the places inhabited by the man-eating tigers which are always known, there is no danger in crossing the jungle.

Many hunters affect to disdain the use of elephants in the pursuit of the tiger, and talk much of the exploits accomplished by them in meeting him face to face. As a general rule, nine-tenths of the tigers which are asserted to have been killed *on foot* have been struck from the top of some high-perched ambush. From this manner of hunting it results that the tiger generally is only wounded; and the real danger then is to follow him to his retreat—a danger most sportsmen take care not to brave.

The few hunters who have made it a point of honour only to attack the tiger on foot always end by being killed, or by getting a wound that effectually cures them of their rash folly.

A man on foot, in the midst of a dense thicket, is defenceless against the tiger. It is impossible for him to distinguish anything at even a few yards' distance in front of him; and he is himself at the mercy of the animal, which can completely hide itself at will, or circumvent him without awakening his attention.

It must not be supposed, however, that tiger-hunting on the back of an elephant does not offer any danger. The hunter is exposed to the attacks of the tiger, which often succeeds in overthrowing the elephant, or in starting him panic-stricken through all the obstructions of the forest."

We fortunately had Mr. H—— with us for our guide. He had repeatedly hunted both the tiger and the elephant, and was as eminent a sportsman as the officer whose interesting remarks I have just quoted. The two elephants, moreover, he had brought had been tested in frequent encounters, and we could rely on their calmness and courage.

During the night the tigers approached our camp several times, and we could hear them calling each other.

At daybreak we left our tent, and proceeded slowly towards the ravine, accompanied by the shikaree [hunter]. Mr. H——was mounted on one elephant, and I on the other, and each animal was driven by a mahout. We started early in the hope of meeting one of the animals out of his lair; but although the sand of the nullah which passes near the village and the bed of which we were following, bore numerous recent footprints, the tigers had already re-entered the thicket. We therefore continued our progress slowly towards the ravine; the arrangement being that I should remain with the shikaree on one side, while Mr. H—— went round by the nullah, and, descending the opposite slope, dislodge the tigers.

I had scarcely reached the limits of the wood extending along the ravine when I perceived one of them, at a distance of a hundred paces before me,

walking along at a quiet measured pace. Just as I was on the point of aiming, the animal disappeared behind a bush.

It happened that at that very instant Mr. H—— appeared on the opposite height; and the tiger, having caught sight of him, issued from the thicket, and advanced stealthily, with his tail lowered, precisely in my direction. I was about sixty paces from him; and, taking aim, I sent him a ball in the ribs while the animal, who had not sighted me, turned his head to follow the movements of my companion.

Uttering a terrible roar, he sprang in the air, and re-entered the thicket.

My mahout urged his elephant forwards, and we were soon in the bed of the nullah, whence we could see the tiger, two hundred yards away from us, escaping towards the wood.

Mr. H——, who had been watching his movements had anticipated him, stopped him with a shot. The wounded tiger, seeing himself surrounded, marched straight towards my companion; whereupon his elephant dreading the encounter, suddenly turned round and took to flight; but the infuriated brute soon came up with him, and with one bound clung to his hind quarters.

A shudder ran through me; I thought our friend was lost.

A few yards only divided us, and the mahout urged my elephant forward by his cries, when Mr. H——, firing full in the face of the tiger, rolled him over to the ground.

He was a thoroughly desperate animal, for, rising again, he rushed this time upon my elephant, which had at length arrived on the scene of action; but even as he made his effort to fasten on to its leg, I shattered his back with a ball, and he fell back expiring. We severally gave him another ball, however, to make quite sure of his death.

Dismounting from my elephant, I went up to my friend, and, shaking him by the hand, congratulated him on having so coolly met the first attack of the tiger. We than examined our victim.

He was a thorough royal tiger, in the prime of life; his coat, of an orange colour, was marked with superb black and white stripes; and from the muzzle to the extremity of the tail he measured rather more than three yards, which is a good moderate size for an adult tiger.

Our elephants proclaimed their delight even more noisily than our huntsmen. The enormous beasts came to scent the carcase of their dead enemy, and turned it over with their trunks, uttering cries accompanied by a regular flourish of trumpets.

The second tiger had prudently slunk out of the ravine during the hubbub, but the next day was surprised at about three miles' distance from the village."

Boar Hunting

Extract from a letter, dated, Par Doorgapore, District Nuddea, 25th September 1817.

The under mentioned distressful account may act as a warning to many young [English] men of the danger to which they expose themselves by the too common and dangerous diversion of Hog-hunting:

Yesterday about 2 p.m., a party of natives who were in pursuit of an immensely large wild boar (which they had wounded) drove it in the direction of some natives who were cutting their paddy, who on seeing the infuriated animal approaching towards them, took to their heels; but one unfortunate being (quite a young lad) not being able to make his escape, was seized by the right arm a little above the elbow, and thrown on the ground. The hog then got upon him, and mangled him most dreadfully in several places: the flesh from his right thigh is entirely taken from the bone; as also the flesh from the right shoulder down to the head, and one side of his posterior is laid open to the bone some inches in length, the back, shoulders and groin are pierced in several places two or three inches deep by the boar's tusks.

Every precaution was taken by me to dress the poor man's wounds, as far as lay in my power, the moment he was brought to the factory, but I am truly concerned to say, I greatly despair of his recovery.

Asiatic Journal

Military Punishments

Soldiers were subject to a number of punishments, of which the following are examples.

Whipping

The punishment of whipping appears to have been left much to the discretion of the jailors, who could inflict the penalty how and when they pleased. The public and private whipping of females was abolished in 1830.

The Pillory

A scaffold for persons to stand on, to render them infamous. In some cases the head was put through a hole, the hands through two others, the nose slit,

the face branded with one or two letters, and one or both ears were cut off. Many persons died in the pillory, being struck by stones by the mob.

The pillory was totally abolished in 1837.

The Strappado

Hanging by the thumbs, so that the delinquents toes can only touch the ground; laying muskets on their shoulders, more or fewer, for a longer or shorter time, according to the quality of the fault; to be kept in prison so many days or weeks, with irons on them, and sometimes to be fed only on bread and water.

"Exemplary punishments are perhaps not less difficult to award. To punish one man for the purpose of deterring some other unknown person from commission of crime, can scarcely be defended upon the common principles of justice, even if it were demonstrated that exemplary punishments are beneficial. But how rarely is it obvious that punishments inflicted for examples sake have possessed much of the deterring principle".

The decimation of a corps appears to have been recognised as a legitimate punishment in the Austrian army during the present century. After the battle of Wagram the Archduke Charles issued a General Order (7th July 1809) of which the following is an extract:- "In every regiment which shall hereafter conduct itself in a similar [cowardly] manner, the tenth man shall be condemned to die, and the rest distributed among the other regiments. The commanding officers shall be cashiered, and all other officers dismissed. Cries of alarm among the troops shall be punishable by death.

Dreadful is the calling of a soldier, OBEDIENCE is 'the Law and the Prophets'. His religion, law and morals are in the 'Orderly Book'. If that says 'spare', he spares; if that says 'destroy' he destroys! The conscience of a good soldier is in the keeping of his general, who has the whole responsibility before God and man for what the soldiers do in obedience to his orders. Perfect obedience is then the yoke which every soldier of the British army voluntarily places upon his own neck when he enlists.

"Those alone", says Count Alfred de Vigny, a retired officer of the French army "who have been soldiers, know what servitude is. To the soldier alone is obedience, passive and active, the law of his life—the law of every day and of every moment; obedience not stopping at sacrifice, nor even at crime. In him alone is the abnegation of his self-will, of his liberty of independent action, absolute and unreserved; the grand distinction of humanity, the responsibility of a moral agent, being made over once for all to superior authority.

In fact, nothing short of this severity has been found necessary, in order that one individual might be the master of 100,000 armed men. Passive obedience from grade to grade, is a condition essential to the existence and efficiency of an army.

When the clockmaker has made a clock, it goes without asking why. Soldier you must be like the clock, march, turn, halt, and above all, not a word".

The fairest and justest way of punishment is by courts of war, if the case do not require a present animadversion [pass criticism or censure]. As to capital punishments, the most honourable death for a delinquent soldier is beheading, the next to that is shooting—if he be a horseman, with pistols,-- if a foot soldier, with muskets.

First Class Corporal Punishment

The execution of the sentence of death by shooting was carried into effect in the following manner:

An execution party is named, composed of hardened deserters, or persons guilty of the same offence for which the party is to suffer; or if there are no men under these predicaments, the party is taken from the men next for duty, and a steady non-commissioned officer is chosen to command them.

The prisoner is then brought from the Provost's, with his hands tied behind him, attended by the chaplain of the regiment, and followed by the execution party. In this manner he is led along the line, guarded by a detachment of the regiment to whom he belongs, or by one of the pickets of the army.

On his arrival at the place of execution, after some short prayers, a cap or handkerchief being drawn over his eyes, he kneels down, and the execution party make ready, moving up within six or seven yards from him, and on a signal given by him, two thirds of these present stand fast; and if he should not be killed, as has sometimes been the case, the reserve step up close to him, and put him out of misery.

All the troops then march by the body, that by the example they may be deterred from a like offence. The recruits, in particular, are generally made to file off close to it.

At a subsequent period the following practice formed part of the ceremony of carrying the sentence into effect.

After the criminal is declared dead, by the surgeons who attend for that purpose, it is the custom to carry the mangled body three times round the

parade or place of execution, in order to render the example the more striking, and to impress the greater terror on the minds of the spectators.

Death by Hanging

In high treason the punishment is in general very solemn and terrible. The delinquent is to be drawn to the gallows and not to be carried, or to walk, though usually a sledge or hurdle is allowed, to preserve the offender from the extreme torment of being dragged on the ground. He is to be hanged by the neck, and then cut down alive. His entrails are to be taken out, and burned while he is still yet alive. Then his head is to be cut off, and his body divided into four parts, the head and quarters being at the King's disposal.

Private Flanagan was a fine looking soldier, about six foot one inch in height. He had excellent natural talents, and had received a tolerably good education. He had acquired a knowledge of Latin and could speak the French language. When the regiment went to India, he was in a short time able to communicate with the natives in several of the languages of the country. Although Flanagan was a smart clever soldier, he was liable to commit slight breaches of military discipline, and his name was consequently sometimes entered in the Defaulter Books.

Being a man of high spirit and violent temper he could ill bear the reproaches of the Adjutant, who repeatedly censured him for his irregularities.

On one occasion he became so irritated with the rebuke he was receiving, that he impatiently pushed the Adjutant from him with the back of his arm. Flanagan was forthwith tried by a court martial for offering violence to the Adjutant, and sentenced to suffer death.

When the sentence was communicated to him, he simply observed that he thought the award of the court was severe. On the day of the execution he preserved the most remarkable firmness, and conducted himself with the strictest decorum. The square having been formed, he, by permission, addressed the company to which he belonged. Having reached the fatal spot the Fort-Adjutant commenced to read the proceedings of the court martial; but having lost self-possession, his tongue faltered, which being observed by Flanagan, he addressed him by saying

"I see, Sir, that you are agitated; pray allow me to read the proceedings for you."

No notice was, of course taken of his offer. He then begged that he should not be blindfolded, and that he be might be permitted to give the word of command to the execution party; both of which requests were granted. He

finally gave the word of command, with as firm a voice as a Sergeant-Major is accustomed to do on a drill parade.

Flanagan's untimely fate took place in June 1828, at Trichinopoly—he having, in all probability, fallen a victim to the unwise, injudicious, and harassing treatment of a superior officer. How far it was beneficial to carry the capital punishment into effect in this case, is not for me to give an opinion. The crime appears to have been the result of a momentary passion, or irritation, not a consequence of design; and perhaps he was hardly sensible of the breach of discipline he committed in the act for which he suffered death.

On the 7th February, 1749–50, the following question was submitted to the House of Commons: Whether a clause ought not to have been added to the Mutiny Bill for preventing any non-commissioned officer being broke or reduced into the ranks, or any officer or soldier being punished but by the sentence of a court martial.

The Earl of Egmont, who spoke in favour of the introduction of the clause, maintained, that:

"We ought to be careful not to give the meanest soldiers of our army an occasion to think that they are in a state of slavery. On the contrary, we should, as far as is consistent with the nature of military service, furnish them with reasons for rejoicing in their being English soldiers, and, consequently, in a condition much superior to that of the slavish armies on the continent. And as this of inflicting punishments by the sole and arbitrary will of a commander, is a power that has been very seldom exercised in time of war, it cannot, I think, be necessary in peacetime."

Another member, who advocated the same side of the question, said—"Gentlemen may talk of the happy condition of the soldiers of our army, and of its being preferable to that of soldiers of any other army; but no man that reflects can think himself happy whilst he is liable to be punished at the mere whim of any man whatsoever. And although I shall allow that a little manual correction may now and then be necessary, yet it is what a good officer will always be very sparing of."

The object of the clause in question:

"is to prevent any military commander taking upon him to subject a soldier to such as have always been deemed military punishments, by his own sole authority."

The clause was withdrawn, and the Bill passed. British soldiers had, I believe, for many ages been liable to the manual correction of officers; and the result of this motion may be considered tantamount to an approval by the

House of Commons of that mode of inflicting punishment. It was not until after the commencement of the present century [19th] that effectual measures were taken to prevent soldiers being beaten by officers; but I believe manual correction, or rather correction with the cane, did not fall into disuse in the East India Company's army for a number of years after it had been practically abolished in the British army.

It may be inferred from a work which was published in 1761, entitled Cautions and Advices to Officers of the Army, by an Old Officer, that soldiers at that time were very liable to receive manual correction "from officers, without any previous legal investigation."

"Never beat your soldiers," says the Old Officer; "it is unmanly. Are they guilty of a crime? Make them prisoners, let them be punished legally by the sentence of a court martial, and my life for it they will never repine. But to see, as I have often done, a brave and honest old soldier battered and banged at the caprice and whim of an arrogant officer, is really shocking to humanity; and I never saw such scenes, but it brought to my recollection the saying of a general to a young officer, perhaps the day after his joining the regiment, thrashing an old soldier, very probably from no other cause but to show his authority, or to look big in the sight of those who came to see him mount his first guard, who called out to him. That is well done sir; beat the dog, thrash him; for you know he dare not strike again. This very consideration ought to be a sufficient restraint from the practice".

"Every man," says the Old Officer, "is capable of knowing and resenting ill usage, the low as well as the high. Change sides for instance. Suppose it had been your fate to have been born in so low a situation, or that by some cause, or reverse of fortune, you were reduced to the necessity of carrying arms for a maintenance, think how you would resent this treatment; how your soul would be torn with grief, rage, and shame, to be treated like a brute, who must be corrected into obedience.

Though soldiers do in some measure part with their liberty when they enlist, yet the law is still ready to screen them from violence, oppression and tyranny, as it was before they entered the service; and surely it is a manifest infringement of the laws to arbitrarily punish at your own discretion, without the opinion of a jury, or sentence passed upon the culprit.

I have been fuller upon this head than I first intended, yet I cannot dismiss it without another caution, which is, that if you have unguardedly been guilty of beating a soldier, do not confine him afterwards; this is punishing him twice for the same crime, which no law on earth that I know, can justify.

I remember once an officer came to his Major, who then commanded the regiment, and stated that a soldier had insulted him grievously, for which he had confined him, and desired a court-martial on him. The Major added to the orders that he was giving to the adjutant, one for a court-martial to try the offender on the morrow; when the officer said he had beat him so long as he had the strength, or that stick (showing the remains of an enormous one in his hand) would hang together.

To this the Major replied,

"Had you, Sir, only confined the man for insulting you, as you told me, you should have seen strict justice done on the delinquent; but as you have thought proper to take your own satisfaction, you must be content with that, for no other shall you have from me. I cannot in conscience punish twice for the same crime:"

He immediately cancelled the order for the court-martial, and ordered the adjutant to set the man free.

It does not appear that the officer incurred any penalty by this conduct; and hence, we may presume, that the manual correction of soldiers was completely sanctioned by custom, if not by law; in other words, officers executed their own sentences.

"Some punishments", says the Old Officer "are inflicted by officers without the sentence of a court-martial, for which custom can only be pleaded, for I know of no other authority they have for it."—Such as, tying neck and heels; The criminal sits down on the ground, when a firelock is put under his hams, and another over his neck, which are forcibly brought almost together by means of a couple of cartouch-box straps.

In this situation, with his chin between his knees, has many a man been kept till the blood gushed out of his nose, mouth, and ears, and ruptures have also too often been the fatal consequences, and a worthy subject lost to the service, or rendered incapable of maintaining himself when the exigencies of the state no longer require his duty. Can anyone who has brought a man into such circumstances ever forgive himself? I think not.

These punishments, barbarous as they are, "says the Old Officer" are only inflicted for petty crimes, as they are called, such as coming to the field of exercise five minutes later than his comrades, or overstaying as many minutes the leave given him by his officer when on guard etc. Will anybody say these trifling crimes deserve such severe punishment? I am aware that it may be asked, are petty crimes and little neglects of duty to escape with impunity?

I answer, No by making the culprit do double duty, that is to mount two guards instead of one, making him stand sentinel four hours instead of two. These and several other methods that might be adopted, are in my opinion punishments sufficiently adequate to such trifles.

Crimes of a deeper dye have their punishment allotted to them in the Mutiny Act and Articles of War, from which a court-martial cannot deviate, without very justifiable reasons. Punishments are necessary while men will be guilty of crimes; but all I contend for" says the Old Officer "is that they ought not to be arbitrary, or inflicted at the whim or caprice of any man whatever, merely perhaps to show his authority, or to glut the cruelty of his disposition."

In giving your opinion," says the Old Officer, "in a regimental court-martial, endeavour to make a distinction in your punishments; make them as near as you can, adequate to the crime. I knew a set of officers sufficient for a court-martial, no more being with the regiment, who constantly allotted one number of lashes to all offenders.

When flogging was frequent in the army, officers were very liable to follow a routine uniformity in their sentences, and to pay too little attention to the discrimination of particular cases, the character of individuals, the best mode of preventing the commission of offences. The tendency of officers to follow in an old track, became from custom, to be considered by all ranks as the ordinary result of a court-martial.

"Give yourself no trouble" said a soldier who had been convicted of intemperance, to the members of a court-martial, who were deliberating the amount of his punishment, "in regard to the number of lashes; just put down the usual 200."

This was one of those numerous cases which occur in the army, where flogging does no good.

Asiatic Journal, 1835.

Military Flogging

Captain F.B. Doveton

Few subjects have undergone more discussion in these days of reform than that of "Flogging in the Army." Effort after effort has been made, hitherto in vain, by liberal-minded and humane men, in Parliament as well as out of it, for the abrogation of this practice—an ignominious one most assuredly, when we consider the tales it tells to our European rivals of the immoral habits of the lower classes of our highly-favoured land. That drunkenness is the crying

sin of the labouring portion of the community is undeniable: the Christian philosopher must determine why religion and inebriety should both flourish in the same soil.

Such being the case, and drunkenness being the parent of most crimes, it is maintained by the defenders of the system, that the discipline of the British army can only be upheld by the cat [the lash]. Indeed, not long since, both in the army and navy, a good flogging was looked upon as a kind of moral panacea. There has, however, been a manifest improvement of late years in this respect, and the flogging system is now carried on to a very limited extent, compared to what it was in "the good old days."

I am by no means prepared to say, that corporal punishment should be at once discontinued in the British service; but I think it should never be resorted to except in cases of theft, which, being the meanest and most degrading of all crimes, at least in the eyes of the community, should be visited in a corresponding manner.

The lash is a most unsuitable remedy for drunkenness, by which, at times, many a high spirited and honourable soldier has been overtaken: it may be taken as a general rule, but with few exceptions, that a soldier who has once figured at the halberds, loses all self respect, and as the blood trickles down his lacerated back, it carries away all professional zeal, and every high and honourable motive of action.

The foregoing remarks are merely prefatory to an incident I am about to relate, which exhibits in a painful light the mischievous effects of this practice.

Whilst our regiment was lying at Rangoon, some time in 1824, two privates of the light company, named Dove and Leman, were cruising about the town, after having pulled somewhat too freely at the arrack bottle. In their wanderings, they unluckily fell in with General——, then commanding the Madras division. They pretended to be ignorant of his rank, and would not salute him. I forget now precisely what passed, but the men were culpable, and the general arraigned them before a regimental court-martial, appearing himself to give evidence against them. They were found guilty, and sentenced to receive a certain number of lashes *in the usual manner*, probably 200 each; for in those days, whatever the offence may be, it was generally visited by a flogging.

The culprits were fine, high spirited young men, and though in this instance they had grievously offended against martial law, they were generally well-behaved.

On the morrow, at an early hour, the regiment paraded for punishment. We formed three sides of a square, in a small cleared space in the vicinity of

our lines, hemmed in on every side by jungle. Here all was ready, the triangle being the most prominent feature in the scene, whilst beside it was drawn up a formidable line of drummers, in their shirt sleeves (the usual mode of doing business in India, on account of the heat), with the drum major at their head, provided with pencil and book, to note the number of lashes; for the practice was then, and still is, I conclude, for each drummer to give twenty-five lashes, so that the unfortunate culprit should receive them *fresh and fresh*. And now every eye was eagerly turned to where the prisoners should have been.

"Where are they?" was asked on all sides.

We were not kept long in suspense, for it was now ascertained that one of them (Leman) had shot himself during the night; thus preferring death to the ignominy of a public flagellation.

Poor fellow! His case excited much sympathy, the more especially as, at the earnest solicitation of the general officer who had brought him forward, the sentence was to be remitted; but the result of a court martial is not promulgated till the regiment is assembled on parade the following day.

I had good cause to remember this painful incident, having been one of the members of the court, and I now record it as a mournful example of the evils attending the indiscriminate use of the lash, which should only fall on the back of the mean-spirited thief, who has no character to lose.

In bygone days, with sorrow be it said, there was a monstrous consumption of whipcord amongst "the Lambs" [Royal Dublin Fusiliers].

The backs of some men, after a time, became so hardened, that flogging was a matter of indifference, and one of our "lambkins," on the occasion of receiving his periodical allowance of cat, is reported to have turned round to the officers and exclaimed, with a laugh,

"Well! I get my three thousand a-year, which is more than many of you can say!"

The heart and the back, under the influence of the lash, are gradually but simultaneously hardened, till, after a time, the operation is considered by many a mere bagatelle."

Reminiscences of the Burmese War,
Asiatic Journal, May/August 1842.

A Military Execution

A military execution must be, under all circumstances and to all persons, an awful and striking exhibition; but seen for the first time, it makes on the young mind a peculiarly deep and painful impression.

An European soldier of one of the regiments at the station had, in a fit of passion and disappointment, attempted the life of his officer, and, agreeably to the necessary stern provisions of military law, was sentenced to be shot. I witnessed the execution; a solemn scene it was, and one which will never be effaced from my memory.

The troops of various arms, European and native, were drawn up, when I reached the parade, and formed in three sides of an immense square, facing inwards. The arms were 'ordered', and a portentous silence prevailed, broken only occasionally by the clank of a mounted officers sword, and the tramp of his horse's hoofs, as he rode slowly down the ranks. The morning mists were beginning to disperse, and the bright sun was darting his long and almost level rays across the parade ground, and gleaming bright on a forest of steel and dazzling accoutrements-- the last sunrise the unhappy criminal was ever destined to behold.

The roll of a drum now announced his arrival, and soon the procession, in which he occupied the most conspicuous position, rounded the flank of one of the sides of the square. First marched, at a slow pace, a party bearing the coffin of the condemned, followed by the execution party; then the band, playing The Dead March in Saul: it was a frightful scene, and sent a damp to my heart—what must have been the effects on the unhappy man himself?

Last in the melancholy procession came a litter (doolie), borne on the shoulders of men; and in it, with a white cap on his head, and a face calm and resigned, but deadly pale, sat the unfortunate man, for whom I confess I felt most deeply. By his side arrayed in full canonicals, walked the chaplain, his book open in his hand, reading those prayers and promises—speaking of pardon and hope—which are intended to cheer the parting hour, and to soften the bitterness of death.

The procession having passed slowly along the front of each regiment, which, from the great extent of the square occupied a considerable time, now drew off to the centre of what might be termed the open face of the parallelogram, or, more properly speaking, of what, if complete would have constituted the fourth side of the square; there it halted.

The coffin bearers placed their burthen on the ground and retired; the execution party drew up at some distance from it. The prisoner left his doolie,

and, accompanied by the clergyman, walked slowly and with a firm step towards the coffin; on this they both knelt, with their faces towards the troops, and prayed with uplifted hands. Profound was the silence. Being a spectator at large, I selected my position, and being close to the spot, saw all distinctly.

After some time had been occupied in prayer, the chaplain retired to a short distance, when the judge advocate, on horseback, came forward, and drawing forth the warrant for the prisoners execution, read it with a firm and audible voice; at the conclusion, the chaplain once more advanced, and kneeling on the coffin, again, with uplifted hands and deep and impressive fervour, imparted the last spiritual consolations to the condemned.

What feelings must have torn the bosom of that unhappy being at that moment! Set up as a spectacle before thousands—an ignominious death before him—and perhaps the thoughts of those he loved, of kindred and home, never more to be seen, adding an other drop to his cup of bitterness! But yet he quailed not—no muscle trembled—and a stern determination to die like a man was stamped upon his careworn and marbly countenance.

The tragedy was now drawing to a close. The chaplain, with apparent reluctance, rose and retired, and at the same moment the sergeant of the execution party advanced and bound a handkerchief over the prisoners eyes, also pinioning his arms. Still not a muscle moved; there were no signs of weakness, though the situation might well have excused them, and the chest was thrown out and squared to meet the leaden messengers of death.

The 'make ready' and the crack of the muskets as they were brought to the 'recover' were startling notes of preparation, and fell with sickening effect on my ear. I could scarcely believe it possible I was looking on the scene of reality—a fellow creature about to be shot down, however deservedly, in cold blood, like a very dog.

'Present!'

'Fire' and all was over.

A mass of balls, close together, pierced his heart—over he went , like a puppet—fell on his back, and never moved a limb. Life seemed borne away on the balls that went through him, and to have vanished with the speed of an electric spark. There he lay, like fallen Hassan 'his back to earth, his face to heaven', his mouth open, as if to put forth a cry which had died unborn with the passing pang; one blood red spot on his cheek, where a bullet had entered, lending its frightful contrast to the marbly hue of his features; the

heel of one foot rested on the coffin, the other on the ground; his hands open and on their backs.

A short pause now ensued, which was soon followed by a stir of mounted officers galloping to and fro, and the loud command to 'wheel back into open column' and 'march!'. In this order, the whole force advanced, the bands of the several regiments playing in succession, as they marched by the corpse, the deep and solemn strains of the *Adeste Fideles*, or Portugese Hymn, a dirge-like air, admirably adapted for such occasions, and which breaths the very soul of melancholy.

As the flanks of each company passed, almost touching the dead man, it was curious to observe the various expressions on the countenances of the soldiers, European and sepoy, as they stole their almost scared and sidelong glances at it.

The non-military reader will be a little surprised, as I am sure I was, when I tell him that each regiment, after having passed the body a few hundred yards, changed the slow to quick march, and diverged to their several lines playing 'The Girl I Left Behind Me', or some similar lively air, with a view, I presume, to dissipate the recent impression.

The wisdom of such a proceeding is my no means self evident: it seems indecent, to say the least of it: to be consistent, we should always ring a merry peal after a funeral, or a gallopade home after church.

Memoirs of a Griffin,
By Captain Bellew
Asiatic Journal, May–August, 1842

Chapter Three

A Murderous Raja

Session Judge's Court, Bhaugulpore,
January 1 [1838]
Oharee v. Raja Chundun Singh

This was a case of very barbarous murder perpetrated by a raja.

The family of the raja placed before the bar, for the commission of this murder, was at one time very respectable in these parts; but owing to the rajas, for two or three generations, being of unsound mind, the zumindaree has been much neglected. The last of the ancient stock, now arraigned for the wilful murder of Kokeen, *feelban* or elephant driver, seems to have a touch of the hereditary malady; for it does not appear in evidence that there was any cause of irritation given by the poor fellow who has been sacrificed by the raja, or koonwur, as he is termed.

The place where the rajas reside is called Muwhar, in purgunnah Muneeharee, lying south-east from the station of Bhaugulpore. The Session Judge was aided in the investigation of this case by the Mahomedan officer, but no assessors.

The case was brought on by the prosecution of Oharee, the brother of the deceased, who represents that his brother was in the employ of Raja or Koonwur Chundun Singh, as a *feelban*, and accompanied him to Burhut; that when he arrived there, the koonwur, very unaccountably, commenced beating his servants, without any cause assigned (in evidence) for such violent proceedings; that the irritability of his temper rose to such a pitch, that he aused his brother to be forced into a room, tied, and cut to pieces.

The deponent was also ordered to be caught, and carried to the place of execution, but fled for his life, without waiting to entreat the koonwur to spare that of his brother.

The real cause of all these proceedings appeared to be this:

A person named Data Ram, mahajun, who was in the interest of some persons not mentioned (probably neighbouring litigant zemindars, who had fallen out on some boundary dispute), had been either on a visit to the raja, or had gone to Burhut on business. While there, the raja seems to have received some serious provocation from Data Ram, whereupon he sought to do him some serious harm, pursuing him with a drawn sword.

Data Ram took to his heels, and escaped the danger to which he was exposed by the exacerbation of the raja's temper to a degree never known by any of the witnesses to have been seen before at any time; but a horse on which he had come to Burhut, and which Data Ram abandoned to its fate in precipitate flight, fell in the way of the Koonwur, and on its carcass he wreaked his vengeance; the animal was cut to pieces by him, with his own hands.

Having thus shed the blood of the beast, he seems to have sought to spend his rage on any other object that might fall in his way. Unfortunately for Kokeen, he happened to catch the eye of his master at this awful crisis of the mania.

How the catastrophe occurred, the deponent does not particularize; but Jhubbun Dhanuk is more precise in mentioning the details of the affair.

By the koonwur's order, Maujea Pulta, Gopal, and Beesoo Goryt, dragged the *feelban* into a shed standing within an enclosure, through which every thing that was transpiring within could be seen and was seen by the witnesses.

Two of the individuals (placed at the bar as accessory to the fact), by the raja's direction, tied the two legs of Kokeen to a post. While the other two held him fast by his hands against it on the opposite side. The raja then drew his sword, and at one stroke almost severed his head from his body. He then almost cut him in two by a stroke which he levelled at his waist; and finally gave him a wound in one of his legs.

Beesoo Goryt, by the raja's order, caused the mutilated remains of the wretched elephant-driver to be conveyed into a neighbouring jungle, but not before they had arrived at an offensive state of decomposition, by having been thrown into one of the close huts within the enclosure before mentioned.

In the jungle, the body was put under the carcase of the slaughtered horse of Data Ram, in which situation, ere long, the bones of man and beast were indiscriminately commingled.

One of the witnesses swore that, at the time of the *Tudarook* or *Soorathhal*, he discovered the bones of the *mohut* [elephant-driver], by the marks of the cuts inflicted by the sword of the Koonwur, deeply left on the neck-bone, ribs, and thigh-bone of the deceased.

Having finished the dark deed, the raja seems to have recovered from the effects of his irritation, and began to contrive means to procure the concealment of the murder he had perpetrated. He prevailed on the people about him and in the place (all his ryuts: agricultural workers) to give it out that Kokeen had died of cholera; and in which attempt to hush up the foul affair, the *suzawul* of police of that part of the country, plainly under the control or in the interest of the raja, takes a conspicuous part.

The raja, a young man of about twenty-five years of age, pleads not guilty, and mentions the story of Kokeen's having died by cholera. The four accessories try to excuse themselves as well as they can; but give a very clear and particular detail of the process and consummation of the catastrophe.

One of the witnesses, Seebun Dhanauk, spoke Hindustanee remarkably well, though he was an inhabitant of the foot of the hills, a site usually occupied by Sountars, Bhooneas and other semi-savage races, that have branched out from the great trunk of Highlanders occupying the huge range that extends from Behar to the Deccan.

But this witness prevaricated a good deal, and the Court found it necessary to warn him of the serious consequences of being found guilty of perjury.

Some of the witnesses, being Puhareeas, were sworn on a little salt put on a knife and washed down into their mouths; while others were sworn on a piece of tiger's skin put into their hands.

It was mentioned by some of the witnesses, that the young raja had exhibited unequivocal signs of distraction, whether as a hereditary malady, or produced by constant addiction to excessive drinking. The words used to express this distraction were *burhuw* (('want of self-possession') and *buhuka* ('straying'), states of mind which might have been occasioned by the inordinate use of ardent liquor, which Seebun Dhanook called brandy, from the colour of it; but the liquor was evidently *muhooka shurab* [an intoxicating] liquor distilled from the flower of the *bassia latifolia*, and sold to an enormous extent all over Hindustan, to the great misery of the people, but with great advantage to the resources of the state.

The liquor represented to have been used was remarkably strong or double-distilled, called by the witness *chouanee* (or four annas a bottle). This in Bengal would be called *doatushuh*, or vulgarly *doasta*, sufficient to drive the most sober head into utter rabidness.

The raja's sanity being called into question, the civil surgeon, who had observed him attentively since his imprisonment, on trial, was called upon to depose to the real state of his intellects, which he did, stating that he had carefully examined his looks, manners, and replies to questions put to him, and saw no indication of insanity.

The law-officer produced his futwah, purporting that the prisoners Maujeea, Pulta Gopal, and Beesoo Goryt, were proved to have aided Koonwur Chundun Singh in killing Kokeen, and were deserving of discretionary punishment by *tazeer;* and that Koonwur Chundun Singh was found guilt of the wilful murder of Kokeen, and was worthy of the extreme penalty of the law (*agoobut-i-shudeed*), and may therefore be punished capitally.

The Court (Mr. T. Wyatt) coincided in the verdict of the law-officer, and ordered the *rooedad* to be forwarded to the Nizamut Adalut for final orders."

The Claimant of the Burdwan Raj

The readers of this *Journal* will remember having seen in our *Asiatic Intelligence* during the years 1836 and 1837, notices of an individual who contrived to gain a considerable number of supporters by some startling proofs of his identity with the heir of the Burdwan Raj. As these notices, taken from the Calcutta papers, were necessarily brief and disjointed, a detailed account of this adventurer, containing many particulars not hitherto brought before the public, may prove acceptable, especially as the narrative is derived from the most authentic source.

In January 1836, great excitement was created in the jungle Mehals, by the appearance of a man calling himself Raja Pertaub Chund, son of the late Raja of Burdwan, supposed to be dead. Burdwan is fifty-six miles from Calcutta and the raja has the reputation of being the richest man in Bengal. He pays the Company some seventy lakhs of rupees annually, as the revenue of the lands which he holds in the district. He is also the owner of large estates in Calcutta; the whole of the new China Bazaar belongs to him.

Burdwan is a populous and productive territory, appearing like a garden in the midst of surrounding jungles. The principal Zemindars are also very rich; many reside at Calcutta, leaving the management of their estates to the management of agents; trade flourishes throughout the district. All the coal used in Calcutta, for the steam boats and other purposes, comes from the bank of the Durmooda, a river of Burdwan, and is a large source of profit, the demand latterly being very great.

The former rajas of Durdwan, after the payment of the revenue and the expenses of their establishment, having a large surplus remaining from their annual income, took the usual method of accumulating treasure employed by persons not yet enlightened upon this branch of political economy by burying it in wells, and the wealth thus concealed was supposed to be enormous.

The late raja had an only son, named Pertaub Chund, who occasioned him a great deal of trouble. This young man resided chiefly in Calcutta, where he led a dissipated life, overstepping, in his eagerness to follow foreign fashions, the bounds of decorum. He was fond of associating with European gentlemen, and of entertaining them after the English custom, and this intercourse leading him to adopt many of the modes and habits of his new acquaintance, he ate beef-steaks and drank cherry-brandy with great gusto, showing upon all occasions his contempt for the precepts so rigidly enforced by his forefathers. His wild conduct gave much offence to the Brahmins, who had obtained great influence at the palace of Burdwan, and who, as usual, flocked to a court which promised to gratify their rapacity. They perceived plainly that the moment in which the young heir came into possession of the raj, would see the end of their authority, and that their holynesses might look in vain for the donations so profusely bestowed at all the religious ceremonies, the various poojahs at which they assisted.

The holy fraternity established at court, finding all their efforts unsuccessful, determined, according to the common opinion of the natives, to make away with the person whom they could not render subservient to their interests.

The prime minister, or head manager, of the raja (Burdwan being under European control) a crafty Brahmin, named Pran Baboo, is supposed to have effected this object, the people of the district asserting to this day that he administered the poison to the young man, whom he considered inimical to his views of aggrandizement; for the heir being disposed of, he succeeded in persuading the raja to adopt his (Pran Baboo's) young son, who in due time came into the inheritance.

That much is certain, that the civil surgeon of Burdwan, having heard that the young raja had been taken suddenly ill, went to see him, but was refused admittance. This circumstance was well calculated to induce the supposition that foul play was intended, and the surgeon applied to the magistrate, who granted a perwana, or order, which gave him access. He found the patient labouring under the symptoms of fever, and anxious to afford him immediate relief, proposed to bleed him.

Pertaub Chund consented, offering his arm for the purpose; but the attendant Brahmins interfered to prevent the operation, saying that it was

against their shasters to let blood. The surgeon thus baffled, returned home, promising to bring some medicine with him at his next visit in the evening; but on going to the palace at about 9 o'clock, he was informed that the young raja, having become worse, had been carried away to Culna, on the banks of the sacred Hooghly, thirty miles distant.

Early the next morning, intelligence was brought to the station that the invalid was dead, and the body burned, this account confirming the general belief, that he had been unfairly dealt with, at the instigation of his enemy, Pran Baboo. The father of Pertaub Chund dying shortly after, Pran Baboo was named as the guardian of his son, the adopted heir of the deceased raja; they are both living, the latter now about seventeen years old.

During a considerable interval, all the affairs of this fortunate youth went on smoothly; but, fourteen years after the presumed decease of the young raja, a person made his appearance in the neighbouring district, who asserted that he was the Pertaub Chand, supposed to be dead, but who had miraculously escaped from the hands of the assassins employed to destroy him.

The fine countenance and commanding figure of this pretender, his insinuating address, and his acquaintance with minute circumstances connected with the person whom he represented, and to whom he bore a strong resemblance, having the same marks and scars upon his body, told greatly in his favour.

The tale he related, to account for the long period which he had suffered to elapse without making any attempt to reinstate himself in his rights, was sufficiently plausible to obtain credit with the multitude, especially as the greater number of persons who espoused his cause had reasons of their own for wishing it to be true.

He stated that, being taken to Culna, while suffering from a severe attack of illness, he chanced to overhear his attendants arrange a plan by which they proposed to take his life. He had been brought to the Hoogly, and was lying on the brink of the stream. Fear inspiring him with strength, at this moment of peril, he plunged into the water, dived, and succeeded in swimming over to the other side. Having thus fortunately escaped from impending death, he found himself suddenly overcome by sleep, and fell into a sort of trance.

During the suspension of the waking faculties, a vision appeared to him from heaven, which produced, of course, a wonderful effect upon his mind. The genius of Brahma reproved him for the unholy life he had led so long, and which had so nearly conducted him to an untimely death in this world,

and to the most fearful punishment ere he could be absorbed into the divine essence.

Finally, however, the celestial vision comforted him with the assurance that there was still a possibility of his being restored to favour, and that he could purify himself from the contamination incurred in eating and drinking with Christians, feasting on the sacred cow, and other abominations, by performing penance as a fakeer during the fourteen succeeding years, which were to be spent in exile in distant lands.

It is no uncommon circumstance for both Mohamedans and Hindus to assume for a time the garb and to practise the austerities of a fakeer; misfortunes, as well as the remorse attendant on the commission of great crimes, inducing individuals to banish themselves into the desert, or to make long pilgrimages, submitting during the whole time to the privation and suffering that may befall them in the character of a religious mendicant.

The pretend Pertaub Chund accounted for the report of his death, by stating that his attendants, though aware that he had escaped their hands, yet, in order to suit the purpose of Pran Baboo, whose interest it was to keep up the deception, gave out that he had expired in the night, and publicly burned a coffin which was supposed to contain his body. Having, according to his account of the obligation imposed upon him by the founder of his religion, worn out the fourteen years as a fakeer, he was at liberty to assert his claimed, and being restored to all the privileges of cast, he made his appearance in the Jungle Mehals.

From whatever source it might have been derived, the impostor had a considerable sum of money at command, and therefore succeeded in collecting some six or seven hundred followers, armed in divers ways. These men were induced to join his standard, first, on account of a bounty of ten rupees, which were offered to all who enlisted in his service; and, secondly, because they entertained a hope of the plunder of Burdwan, which would have enriched them all for life. Many of the recruits were Coles, and had they been permitted to reach the capital, they would have proved very dangerous invaders. Burdwan being, what is called a civil station, there was no garrison in its neighbourhood, and, left to the defence of its unwarlike inhabitants, it would have had little chance against Pertaub Chund's people, who were somewhat formidable, in consequence of their having more efficient weapons in their hands than are usual in a promiscuous multitude of native insurgents.

Before the economical system, so much lauded in some quarters, all the muskets condemned at the inspection of government stores were broken up; but an order was issued for the sale of these arms, which were eagerly

purchased by warlike spirits, anxious to possess themselves of weapons, which, although not without a flaw, were better than they could obtain of native manufacture.

Some disastrous results in Oude, and the alarm created by Pertaub Chund's followers, occasioned the rescinding of an order which was found so prejudicial to the maintenance of public peace; the old system has been reverted to. At the period in which the pretended raja showed himself in the Jungle Mehals, an embassy from Nepal, comprising a Nepalese regiment of a thousand men, commanded by General Malabha Sing, an extraordinary character in his way, was on its route to Calcutta.

Pertaub Chund, aware how greatly the idea of being supported by native powers to the northward would assist his claims, followed close on the march of the great man, giving out that he had promised his assistance, and would employ his influence with the Governor General, to procure the reinstatement of the rightful heir in the possession of Burdwan.

He likewise caused it to be reported that Runjeet Sing was preparing to come to his assistance with a large army, well knowing how much this belief would forward his views.

Pertaub Chund, having marched to the confines of the Burdwan territory, sent a complimentary letter to Mr Elliott, the resident magistrate, reporting his arrival, and stating his intention of entering the district under his jurisdiction. Mr Elliott, in reply, directed the pseudo raja to present himself at the cutcherry, to account for his appearance with so large a number of armed followers in his train.

It not being convenient to obey this mandate, the raja returned an evasive answer, and that very day, in spite of the civil authorities, passed through the city of Bankorah in state, recruiting as he marched along. By this time, the pretensions of the claimant to the raj were pretty well known throughout the adjacent country; rumours of his intended approach had reached the capital, and scenes of tumult and depredation were contemplated by the alarmed inhabitants. The few European residents, dreading the consequences of popular commotions of so dangerous a nature, were preparing to fly, and the whole place was in a state of ferment. All who were disaffected to Pran Baboo being ready to support the usurper, while those who were interested in the continuance of the present state of affairs, were apprehensive of great mischief, both to the family in possession of Burdwan, and to themselves.

Hitherto, Pertaub Chand had abstained from any act that would bring him under the cognizance of the law; his followers made no attempt to levy contributions on the inhabitants, paying for all their supplies; induced to

practice self denial, so difficult to a native with a weapon in his hand , and friends to back him up, in the hope of a greater advantage from the plunder to ensue. The pseudo raja appeared to be accurately acquainted with the places in which the treasure accumulated by former chiefs lay buried, and the possession of this information, and the expectation of speedily turning it to account, stimulated the irregular force which he had gathered together to the maintenance of a degree of discipline, certainly very creditable to the sagacity of their leader.

On his refusal, however, to appear before the civil authority, who had a right to demand his attendance, and his acting in defiance of the government peons, who were directed to prevent him from passing through Bankorah, Mr Elliott considered himself justified in calling in the aid of the military. To the activity and promptitude of a young man, who did not hesitate to take a degree of responsibility upon himself which many would have shrunk from, the district owed the preservation of its tranquillity. Though not as yet guilty of any overt act, the hostile intentions of the pretended Pertaub Chund could not be doubted.

Instead of going down to Calcutta, and proving to the satisfaction of the supreme authorities the justice of his claim to the Burdwan raj, he preferred a course which could scarcely fail to end in bloodshed, and the object of which was the enriching of himself and his followers by the plunder of the city, and the seizure of the treasure.

The cantonments of the British troops, according to a custom invariably observed throughout all India, were situated at a distance of more than a mile from the native city in their neighbourhood. The thirty-first regiment happened to be quartered there at the time, and the commanding officer directed the lieutenant first upon the list for duty, to put himself at the head of two companies, and seize and bring in the person of Pertaub Chund.

The great point was, to effect this object without bloodshed; and the young officer, to whom the affair was entrusted, felt anxiously desirous to perform this duty without taking the lives of the misguided people with whom he would come into collision, or losing any of those of his own men.

He had two officers and a surgeon under him, and the adjutant of the corps accompanied the party as a volunteer. Lieut.——, the subaltern in question, in consequence of his acquaintance with Hindustani, and his intercourse with the natives, was well aware of the nature of public feeling upon the subject of Pertaub Chund's pretensions, and the necessity of going cautiously to work in any attempt to apprehend him. He therefore, went quietly round to the sepoy's quarters, and directed the detachment to fall in

at 10 o' clock at night, without stir or bustle; instructions which were afterwards discovered to be very essential, since the native doctor of the corps was actually in correspondence with the pretender, and would not have failed to give him information of the movement of the troops, had it been generally known in the cantonments.

Accordingly, without beat of drum, the party mustered, and, much to their surprise, were not marched directly to Bankotah. The officer commanding deemed it expedient to avoid the town, since on the very first appearance of the troops, the emissaries of Pertaub Chund would not have failed to apprize him of their approach, and once scattered in the jungles, it would have been impossible to find either him or his followers.

There had been some difficulty in getting accurate information concerning the measures for personal security taken by the pretended raja. It was ascertained, however, that four chuprassess, armed with swords kept watch at the door of the house in which he took up his abode, and that his quarters for the night would be at a chuttee, a few miles in advance. A chuttee is a village built for the accommodation of pilgrims on their way to any celebrated shrine; and apprehensive of no molestation, the chief and his followers, with few exceptions had sunk into repose.

After making a detour through the pathless places, not very easily trodden in the dark, the two companies fell into the high road, about three miles from Bankorah, whose inhabitants remained in perfect ignorance of their having passed the walls.

Upon arriving at the chuttee, the officer in command charged the sepoys not to fire on any account unless he himself should give the word. He appointed four of the soldiers to an especial duty, each being directed to seize one of the chuprassees at the door, and to hold him tightly in his embrace, in order to prevent any one of them from giving the alarm, or doing mischief.

The chuttee was rather extensive, consisting of several streets, and surrounded by heavy jungle; the party entered in silence, and learning from a stray inhabitant that Pertaub Chund had taken up his quarters in the best house (a stone building down a narrow lane), the anxious commandant immediately proceeded in that direction.

The cuirasses were found, according to the information, with swords drawn, and upon the alert; but the sepoys coming up suddenly, they were seized before they were aware of the approach of the foe.

Lieut.—, rushing into the house with a pistol in his hand, made his way into the apartment in which he discovered the object of his search, lying on

a charpoy, or native bedstead, of which there were two in the room, one of his confidants, dignified by the title of prime-minister, occupying the other.

Taken wholly be surprise, the pseudo raja awoke to see a pistol at his head, and to find his chamber filled with armed sepoys. The scene was singular; eager in the execution of their duty, the soldiers followed closely upon the steps of their officer, and lining the small apartment, pointed their bayonets at the prisoner, ready at a word, or even a look, to plunge them into his body.

Pertaub Chund started up, with a sword in his hand, which he grasped at the first alarm; but perceiving resistance to be useless, he obeyed the directions of his captor, putting on his slippers, the only portion of his garments which he had laid aside upon retiring, and surrendering his sword.

The followers were secured as easily, the greater number being fast asleep at the moment of seizure.

The pretender, under the charge of a native officer, was despatched immediately across a small river, and upon his arrival he sent his salaam to Lieut.—, with a request that he would take charge of a box, containing money and papers, which he would find under the charpoy on which he had slept.

Search was accordingly made for the box, which had not however escaped inviolate, the raja's attendants, it was supposed, having made free with the valuable portion of its contents. All the money had vanished, but the papers remained, and among them the documents before mentioned, which showed that the native doctor of the thirty-first regiment was in correspondence with the pretender.

In the apartment three bottles were also found, two of which though empty, had evidently contained brandy, the third was about three parts gone, showing the pretended Pertaub Chund resembled the person who he represented, in the habit of indulging himself in the use of spirituous liquors. The young raja had the reputation of being a three bottle man, and many persons were convinced of the identity of the individual who assumed his character, from the power he exhibited of swallowing the same quantity.

It may be worth stating to mention, that the importation of brandy into Calcutta has latterly increased to an enormous extent; while the consumption was limited to Europeans, the demand was comparatively small; but now that the higher classes of native have taken to drinking brandy in large quantities, the supply has been proportionate.

The lower orders of Bengallees were always addicted to the use of intoxicating liquors; but formally the habit was reckoned disreputable among

the better sort; this opinion, unfortunately, is no longer of any weight, while prejudices, hostile to all improvement are scrupulously maintained.

The insurgents being secured, preparations were made for the march to Bankorah, the pretender being placed in the centre of the detachment, guarded on either side. The night, or rather the morning, was bitterly cold; but standing upon his dignity, Pertaub Chund chose to move "with solemn step and slow", pausing at every stride. Lieut.— requested him to quicken his pace, alleging the necessity of pushing onto Bankorah; but the prisoner represented that it was wholly beneath his high station to walk at all, and that, moreover, he was not accustomed to the use of his feet.

Lieut.— observed that, although, as heir to Burdwan, he might not have been used to pedestrian exercise, yet, in his wanderings as a fakeer, he must have trudged over a pretty considerable quantity of ground. Unwilling, however, to show any discourtesy towards a person who had not offered resistance, he sent to the village, and with some difficulty procured bearers, who carried the raja and his confidential friend in the palanquins that belonged to them. In this manner they reached Bankorah, greatly to the surprise of the people of that place, who had remained in total ignorance of the events passing in their immediate neighbourhood.

The moment the news of Partaub Chund's capture and detention in prison was made known at Calcutta, the clique of rich natives inimical to Pran Baboo, who had hitherto supported the impostor in his pretensions, determined upon affording him all the assistance in their power in his present difficulty. Accordingly, they sent up two English gentlemen of the legal profession, who arrived without loss of time, and took up their quarters in the dak bungalow, erected for the accommodation of travellers.

Soon afterwards, a third attorney made his appearance upon his own account; but the raja having put his case in the hands of Messrs — and — , he was obliged to return bootless home.

Meanwhile, the prompt assistance, and the assurance which it gave of powerful friends in the back-ground, alarmed Pran Baboo. In fact, his affairs had become very much embarrassed, in consequence of the policy pursued by the pretender, who had caused circular letters to be written to all the persons to whom the present possessor had farmed out the lands of the raj, which were held by the Company, according to the usual tenure. In these letters, Pertaub Chund desired the tenants to withhold their rents, until he, the rightful claimant, should demand payment himself at their hands; he also recommended them to abstain from making new agreements which would be set aside the moment he came into possession; and in consequence of this proceeding matters of great importance remained unsettled.

Up to the period of his apprehension, Pertaub Chund had acted with great circumspection. He committed, however, a grievous error of judgement in allowing himself to be surprised after the magistrate had shown an inclination to prevent him from proceeding through the district. If, instead of wasting time at the chuttee, he had pushed on by forced marches from Bankorah to Burdwan, he could not have failed to achieve his object, as far as the seizure of the treasure was concerned.

Fortunately, however, for the preservation of public tranquillity, his career was arrested in time; and considering all the circumstances of the case, much credit is due to the young officer who succeeded in the attempt to surprise an adventurer, so justly depending upon the receipt of timely information, and who effected this important objective without the loss of a single man. Probably, had Pertaub Chund, in the first instance, preferred his suit before the Supreme Court in Calcutta, he might have succeeded in his object, for half Bengal, at least, would, if necessary, have sworn to his identity.

He possessed, in a very extraordinary degree, those persuasive powers which win upon the minds of men, not only gaining an influence over the natives with whom he conversed, but interesting Europeans in his behalf.

The personal appearance of the impostor is very much in his favour; his figure, tall and commanding, showed to great advantage in the rich dress he now wore. His manners are those of a person accustomed to good society, and he speaks several languages, Persian and English included. The resemblance which he bears to the late raja is so strong, that two of the wives of the deceased prince, who were living in the palace at Burdwan, acknowledged him for their husband, and remitted large sums of money for his use.

These ladies, it is true, were not admitted to an interview; but the representations of persons who were in daily communication with the pretender, and who described his person, and repeated anecdotes which he related concerning his early life, so completely convinced them of his identity, that they became very anxious for the successful issue of his claims.

Though saved from the immediate danger that threatened him, by the seizure and imprisonment of the pretended Pertaub Chund, Pran Baboo did not sleep on a bed of roses; public opinion, he was well aware, was not in his favour; more than suspected of having obtained his present eminence by foul means, he was cordially detested by all who were not in some way benefited by his advancement. Though sufficiently liberal to his brethren, the Brahmins, who crowded to a court where they were sure of being well received, he had the character of being a great niggard in all commercial dealings, grinding down the poor ryots [farmers] to the uttermost farthing.

A large majority, therefore, of the inhabitants of Burdwan desired nothing better than a change, and were anxious to be rid of the person by whom they were oppressed. Meanwhile, either from zeal, or pretended apprehension that they might be compelled to produce their rents twice over, they excused themselves from the payment of the sum due on account of the advances which they had received; and Pran Baboo plainly perceived that, until the panic should subside, there would be no such thing as getting any money.

While the examinations were being taken, the utmost sympathy was manifested for the pretender, whose cause seemed to gain ground every day in the estimation of the people. Being so well provided with legal advisers, Pran Baboo was afraid that matters might go in favour of the claimant thus supported, unless he could get some friend to espouse his cause, whose influence would counteract that of his adversary.

Accordingly he wrote to the gentleman who held the appointment of civil surgeon to the district, and who likewise was extensively engaged in the culture of indigo, requesting him to take upon himself the character of Mooktear, or agent, on his behalf.

This gentleman was not unwilling to agree to the proposal, offering as it did, a legitimate means of pecuniary emolument; but a question arose with the magistrate respecting the policy of the interference on the part of a person with whom he was known to be on terms of the greatest intimacy. Natives are notorious for their readiness to believe that interest with men in office can achieve every thing, and that favour, rather than justice, procures the decisions pronounced in courts of law.

The case, therefore, would have been much prejudiced in the eyes of the surrounding community had a European medical officer, in daily and friendly intercourse with the judge, been permitted to act as mooktear for one of the contending parties. It was the more desirable that the decision in this case should have all the appearance of being unbiased, because Pertaub Chund's cause was the popular one with the multitude, and however strongly the magistrates might be convinced of the attempt at imposture in pronouncing in favour of Pran Baboo, they were likely to incur a suspicion of partiality to the person who possessed the means of rewarding it.

This delicacy on the part of the judge obliged Pran Baboo to have recourse to other measures; he, therefore, despatched a party of his own friends, with a large retinue of camels, elephants, tents, etc, who formed themselves into an encampment on the outskirts of Bankorah, adding by their presence greatly to the excitement and bustle of the scene. They took care to inform their principal; that nothing was to be done without money, stating the necessity

of bribing all the native officers of the court in the first instance, and of winning over the judge sahib by the same means, a thing to be accomplished, though with a greater degree of delicacy.

Pran Baboo fell into the snare spread for him by his friends and confidents, who were supplied with a lakh of rupees for the purpose of procuring a decision in his favour, every pice of which went into the pockets of the persons whom he paid liberally for advocating his cause, a circumstance which came to his knowledge at a subsequent period.

The presence of these people, and that of the Calcutta lawyers, and the circumstance of the rivalry on the part of the latter to procure the mooktear-nameh, or power of attorney, to act for Pertaùb Chund, occasioned much excitement at Bankorah, as to threaten the peace of Burdwan, and it was deemed expedient to send the prisoner to Hooghly to take his trial.

The magistrate wished to have a guard of soldiers for the purpose of securing his safe conduct to the place of destination, but the Government objected to this arrangement, as being likely to invest the prisoner with a greater degree of importance than his pretensions merited. To be marched across the country with a military escort, would have occasioned a sort of triumph, which could not fail to elevate the pseudo raja in the eyes of the people, and to give them an idea that he was looked upon in Calcutta in the light of a great personage, who could not be treated in the normal way.

The civil power was, therefore, directed to take the best method that offered, by means of cuirasses, to lodge the prisoner in safety in the goal at Hooghly. It was thought necessary to convey him away privately by night, without making the intended change in the place of his trial public; and a strong body of police placed at the disposal of the magistrate proved sufficient to effect this object.

The pretended Pertaub Chund went away very quietly, making no attempt to escape; he was probably by this time satisfied with the results of his attempt, since, although a prisoner, he was treated with great consideration and courtesy, and, moreover, might entertain a hope that his friends who had supported him thus far, would succeed in their endeavour to establish his claim to the Burdwan raj.

When lodged in the goal at Hooghly, the self styled raja abated not one whit of his pretensions. He was accommodated with apartments befitting his elevated rank, and enacted the prince with great success, receiving visits from vast numbers of persons, who, from various motives, were induced to solicit an interview.

Amongst his numerous guests, one appeared, whose recognition was considered to favour his pretensions. General Allard, a French officer, in the service of Runjeet Sing, who had lately returned from France in a political capacity, happened to be at the time in Bengal, and renewed his acquaintance with the prisoner, whom he had known at Lahore, when under the guise of a fakeer. It is said that the General, notwithstanding the difference in appearance occasioned by the exchange of the ·tattered garments of a mendicant for the rich dress, which he had now assumed, recollected at once the person with whom he had formally conversed; and as upon two occasions he entered into a private conference, the hopes of the party favouring the pretender began to revive.

The renewal of acquaintance on the part of the General certainly favoured the report so industriously circulated, that Runjeet Sing had promised the assistance of an army for the recovery of Burdwan, and all Pertaub Chund's supporters flattered themselves that he would the countenance of the Lion of the Punjab.

When the trial at length came on, the prisoner was arraigned upon a charge of moving through the district, contrary to the regulations of Government, with an armed force; no notice being taken of his pretensions to the raj. Mr Turton, one of the most celebrated counsel of Calcutta, came up from the presidency for the purpose of affording his assistance in aid of the attorney who had already officiated at all the preceding examinations. These gentlemen were desirous to commence, by urging the inquiry concerning the identity of the prisoner with the son of the late Raja of Burdwan. They were prepared to forward hosts of witnesses, who, if oaths would have accomplished the object, were ready to swear that he was, beyond all question, the person that he represented himself to be. This point, however, not being before the Court, the endeavour proved unavailing.

The charge of marching tumultuously through the district with an armed force, for the alleged purpose of seizing the raj being fully substantiated, the so called Pertaub Chund was sentence to six months imprisonment. This decision was considered to be very severe, especially when the length of time which the delinquent had already passed in confinement was taken into account. But it seemed necessary to allow a sufficient interval to elapse, in order that public excitement might cool down, before so mischievous a person should again be let loose upon society; for though bound by heavy recognizance's to keep the peace, the facility with which obtained money might have enabled him to forfeit them, could his abettors have hoped that he would yet succeed in his attempt.

Some writers upon India have declared that there is no such thing as public spirit to be found in the country, no abstract love of justice; certain it is, that the most formidable leaders have not been able to maintain there position, or to rally broken fortunes after the first ebullition of popular feeling has subsided. Their followers will die with them, but when once scattered, are not easily collected again; and it was rightly conjectured, that as time wore away, the partisans of the pseudo raja would drop, and that the difficulties of exciting a second commotion would be naturally enhanced.

Gradually the true history of the pretended raj became known, although the means by which he contrived to impose upon so many persons remained undiscovered. It was supposed, that he must have been acquainted with the individual whose character he had assumed, being probably at some period in his service, and had learned from him many of the circumstances which he afterwards so ingeniously employed in the proof of his identity with the deceased prince.

The extraordinary personal resemblance which he bore to the son of the late raja, and which must often have been the subject of remark added to the opportunities which somehow or other he had obtained of becoming familiar with the domestic history of the Burdwan family, doubtless incited him to an attempt which, even though only partly successful, materially bettered his condition.

During his imprisonment in the goal at Hooghly, it was rumoured that the pretended Pertaub Chund was in reality the son of a brumhacharee, or keeper of a temple, named Shamanundo, of Kishnaghur, and that he had been an assistant at the same place. Several persons who were well acquainted with the parties, went to the gaol, and at once recognized Kistolall, their old companion, in the self styled raja.

The young officer who had apprehended the impostor, upon his progress, being summoned to Hooghly at this time to give evidence at the trial, felt anxious to witness the result of an interview between him and a German missionary, for some time resident at Kishnaghur, and therefore accompanied the party to the gaol.

The missionary carried several native Christians, readers of the Scriptures, with him, who, as well as himself, had enjoyed many opportunities of seeing the brumhacharee and his son; the teachers of Christianity always haunting the neighbourhood of heathen temples. The visitors were received with much assumption of dignity, but when the pseudo raja glanced his eye over the padre and his native attendants, he evidently blanched.

It was, however, only for a moment; recovering himself immediately, he replied to the familiar salutation with which they greeted him, with perfect self-possession; protesting, on being claimed as an acquaintance, that he had never seen them before.

During the whole of the interview, the impostor, after the first sudden look of surprise, maintained an inflexible imperturbability of countenance; but the young officer observed that his chest heaved with internal agitation, and that it was not without difficulty that he preserved the semblance of tranquillity.

Other persons subsequently came forward, who gave the same account concerning his occupation at the temple at Kishnaghur, or who had known him intimately in different places, and to those who were neither blinded by interest or prejudice, it was clear that, whether by fair or foul means, the real Pertaub Chund had died at Culna, and that the individual who had assumed his identity was nothing better than an impostor. The inducements which led this adventurer to adopt the garb of a fakeer, and to wander as far as Lahore, did not transpire; but, as it has been before remarked, the circumstance is so common among the natives of Hindustan, as to excite little speculation.

At the expiration of his imprisonment, the pretended raja found no difficulty in procuring the securities required by Government, the friends by whom he had been so long supported coming forward on this occasion. Upon his release he proceeded to Calcutta, where he was still residing when the last accounts reached England. He talks of bringing his claims before the Supreme Court; but it is supposed that this intention is merely reported to keep up the apprehensions of Pran Baboo, and to embroil him still further with the putneedars, on the receipt of whose rents he must depend for the payment of the revenue.

Hatred against Pran Baboo, a determination on the part of the rich and influential enemies in Calcutta to work him all the mischief in their power, have been the causes of the untiring support and lavish expenditure bestowed on a pretender to a raj, by whose means they hope at length to effect his ruin.

Meanwhile the impostor, notwithstanding the three bottle of brandy found in his possession, is looked upon as a very holy person, and respected accordingly, reaping a substantial reward for the deceptions he has practised, in the shape of a high reputation, and ample means of supporting his assumed rank. Such are the chances of human affairs in Asiatic society.

Asiatic Journal, May–August 1838.

Chapter Four

The Plague Ship

By Lieutenant J.R. Wellsted

In one of the winter evenings last year, a party of my brother officers, of the Indian Navy, who had passed many years of servitude in the East, assembled in a snug room of mine, and were relating various incidents and adventures that had befallen them during their long absence from their native land. It was singular that, though by profession voyagers by water, we had all been travellers by land. Each had recounted his successes in overcoming some peril, when a brief pause in the conversation was thus broken by the junior of the party:

"Well, I do believe I am one of the most unlucky devil in existence. I belong to a service where I should rise by rotation; but it is one in which nobody dies, and it seems utterly impossible to kill them. You", added he, "for instance, are here, safe and sound, after your wanderings in Arabia, and after being desperately wounded. You", he pointed to a second, "went down in a steamer in the Euphrates, and although no Humane Society existed in those parts was resuscitated. You", to a third, "got through without care or precaution, two plagues at Bagdad, which swept off 80,000, out of a population of 120,000, and were rescued after having been led out to be stoned at Damascus; but worse than all, here is one," pointing to the fourth, who has actually had the plague, and yet lives to torment me."

The wind pattered against the window, and the wind rushed by in fitful gusts; in a word, it was an English November evening. As I foresaw that a tale was inevitable, I did my best in self-defence. The table was drawn nearer the fire, and the fire stirred into a blaze as we closed around it. As our glasses were charged, "Come" said I, "As none of us keep either the middle or morning watches to-night, let us have this wondrous tale."

After some modest apologies for its length and toughness, my friend [Lieut. A. Nott, Indian Navy] commenced as follows, addressing himself at first to me.

"We last parted some three years ago, to travel in very opposite directions; you for the unexplored portions of Arabia; I westward, after an absence of fifteen years, to revisit my native land. We meet now, after strange events befalling both: but to my tale. Although no person is better qualified to estimate the miseries, not to say dangers, of a three months voyage in a native boat from Bombay to Suez, than yourself, yet the subsequent occurrences of my journey so completely absorb the interest of every thing which preceded my arrival there, that you must be content to take me up to Cairo."

"It was in the month of March 1833, and the plague was raging with great violence in Alexandria. To avoid entering the city, I determined to proceed to Rosetta, and thence by sea to the port of Alexandra, so as to obtain a vessels without landing. I was accompanied by a young military friend. A small brig, the *Espirito Santo,* in which we embarked, sailed the day we arrived at Leghorn, and as we left the harbour we could not but congratulate ourselves on our escape from the abode of pestilence, little imagining that the germ of the terrific malady was latent amongst us.

All was bustle, gaiety, and life; the breeze was fresh and fair, and our little bark sprung gaily forward. Alexandria was on the horizon, but its domes and lofty minarets were fast sinking beneath it, and the sun shone upon them gloriously as if its beams were not illuminating a whitened sepulchre.

We had been seven days at sea, when one of the crew was taken ill, and died on the following evening. I was somewhat alarmed at the account given; a suspicion flashed across my mind that it might be plague. I therefore requested our doctor, a young Italian, who had not, I was informed rendered the man assistance during his illness, to examine the corpse, and he at once reported, though with reluctance, that he had died of that dreadful disease.

The announcement struck everyone with astonishment and horror. Although keenly alive to our fearful situation, my companions and I affected a Mohamedan calmness, and past the time either smoking or sleeping in a part of the poop we had appropriated to ourselves.

An other day passed, and no one complained. Already we had begun to indulge in the hope that it might be confined to the individual who had died; but the morrow made us acquainted with the full horrors of our situation—three others were simultaneously attacked with the symptoms, which left us in no doubt as to their disorder.

It became necessary to adopt the best precautionary measures left us; and I suggested the long-boat, which is always stowed in the middle of the vessel, should be cleared for the reception of the infected, and such refreshment as they wished for was conveyed to them by long poles.

Two speedily died, and were drawn forth by hooks attached to the end of the poles, and thrown overboard; but a third lingered on for some hours, and in the delirium which, in plague cases, usually precedes dissolution, in spite of the efforts of the crew, who stood with poles, oars, etc, to prevent him, he crawled from the boat, and endeavoured to make his way to the after-part of the vessel:

I never witnessed so ghastly an object.

Frantic at the opposition offered to his progress, he clutched at the decks with desperate violence; his eyes fixed and glaring, and the saliva fell from his lips as he gnashed his teeth or bit at the staves which intercepted his further progress.

Finding he was making his way aft in spite of all opposition, I suggested that a rope should be thrown over him, and the end fastened to the launch. My suggestions were in part adopted; but conceive my horror, after he had been tangled up in the noose, to perceive a Maltese seaman spring up the rigging, run the end through a block on the froe yard-arm, and pass it below!

In vain I remonstrated: "It may be your turn next" said the captain, with a fiendish sneer. I have seen a mad dog in a kind of area, so furious, that he was actually breaking his teeth against a wooden door, but when a gun was brought and pointed at him, before it was discharged, all his ferocity forsook him, he crawled into a corner, looked and howled imploringly upwards.

Thus it was with this unfortunate man. The crew had eagerly seized the rope: in broken accents, the dying wretch implored for mercy—mercy in a plague ship! He was swayed over the side, suspended for a moment in mid air, as the seaman on the yard drew forth the knife from his girdle, opened it with his teeth, and severed the cord: a splash, one faint struggle, and the wild waves rolled over him for ever.

I affect no mawkish sentiment, nor describe any overwrought feelings; but never, to the latest hours of my existence, will that man's look be effaced from my memory—never will the chill of horror which crept over me at the enactment of the last part of the tragedy be forgotten.

I rejoined my companions; but felt faint and sick.

Almost indifferent to my own fate at the moment, I listened with apathy to an old Greek merchant, who was relating the manner in which the plague had been brought on board. What will a man not risk for gain? Our commander, six days before we left, had received, and kept concealed in a boat towing astern, five plague patients from another vessel; and although when the ship sailed, but two survived, those two were permitted, without mention being made of it, to mix with the crew. Under such circumstances, the only wonder is, that it should have concealed itself for so long. Those who had indulged the hope that their riddance of the last patient had exterminated the pestilence, were again doomed to disappointment. Ere the sun had set, two more were attacked, and about eight o'clock a third: all were transferred to the long-boat.

Not a hope of our escaping if we remained at sea was now cherished, and the vessels head was now put the Rhodes.

In the course of an hour, the Mohamedan portion of the crew were already wrapt in slumber: the Christians (principally Italians and Greeks) were either scattered or in silent groups; here and there, a solitary individual was in thought of home, meditating on wife and friends, and pledging his votive offering if ever he joined them in safety again. The wind had fallen light, and the waves surged heavily up the vessels side, both mingling at intervals with the groans of the sufferers in the long-boat. My own feelings I do not attempt to describe. I had faced death before in many shapes; yet never did I feel so utterly depressed. My mind had received a shock, for which it was not doomed it should quickly recover. I watched the greater part of the night, and at length sunk into that heavy slumber, which usually follows high mental excitement.

I awoke the next day at sunrise. Everything appeared in confusion; the yards were not trimmed to the breeze, and the braces were hanging slack, they swung lazily to and fro with the motion of the vessel. The men looked pale and exhausted, as from long watching: an old man, about seventy years of age, proved an exception; he was a Turk, and when I enquired how he could openly break the precept of his religion, by quaffing the forbidden wine, he told me it was medicine, and repeated an Arabian proverb, equivalent to our 'Desperate diseases require desperate remedies'.

There was no arguing, had I felt so disposed, with such a philosopher. The day passed away heavily enough; about noon, another dead body was removed and thrown overboard from the charnel house—the longboat—and two more patients were deposited there.

Without being ill, I fancied it utterly impossible to shake off the depression of spirits under which I laboured. I went down with the others to supper; but the sight of viands made me feel dizzy, and a total absence of appetite. Wishing not to alarm anyone, I quietly withdrew from the table to my cabin, and had no sooner thrown my self on my couch, than I was seized with a convulsive shuddering, which was succeeded by a burning fever.

My companion, who had been watching my increasing paleness, and had seen me retire, thought all was not right, and came to my cabin door. A conviction immediately seized him as to the true state of the case; but wishing to soothe me, he calmly remarked, that we should be at Rhodes in the morning; and drew forth my money from a trunk, and placed it near my pillow. With a degree of moral courage which does him honour, he did not fear to moisten my lips with some vinegar and water which he mixed for me; and then quietly telling me to compose myself and that I should be better on the morrow, he left me, to go on deck.

I must have quickly sank into a state of exhaustion; for not half an hour elapsed ere he approached the cabin again, but receiving no answer, concluded that I had fallen into a doze; and at a late period of the night both he and the captain, after endeavouring in vain to rouse me, concluded I was, as I appeared to be, dead.

The morning came—I awoke with the keenest torments; my eye balls felt as if they protruded, and throbbed with fearful violence. I suffered a raging thirst: a burning liquid seemed to traverse my veins—my brain whirled—I again passed into insensibility, and again recovered my senses.

A tumour had formed under my left arm; this was sufficient to confirm my worst apprehensions as to the nature of my affliction; but, strange to say, with that confirmation returned all the strength of mind or firmness it may be my good fortune to possess.

'I have escaped', thought I 'through perils nearly as great as this, and under the protecting hand of Providence, I may yet recover'.

I laid perfectly quiet, I suppose, for some hours, and then was roused by hearing the chain cables running out.

This ceased, and the noise was followed by low moanings, succeeded by louder lamentations; yet there was not the usual din and bustle of ship-board.

Eager, notwithstanding my illness, to ascertain what was doing, I crawled forth from my couch to the upper deck, and saw no one but the cook and three companions; they were crying and beating their breasts. I learnt that the captain and those of the crew and passengers who remained in health,

finding that they were sufficiently near the shore, had lowered the only boat, had crowded in her, and made the best of their way towards it, leaving myself and my companions in misery to our fate.

Just before they pushed off, they cut away the anchors; there was however no bottom, and we were drifting slowly with the wind and current towards the land. I again crawled towards the poop, where I seated myself near to a jar of water (for my thirst continued unabated), to await further events.

My companions crowded around me; four persons were in the launch—two dead and two unable to move, yet lingering—one an Italian gentleman, had occupied his horrid tenement three days; their groans were truly heart-rending.

At a distance of 150 yards from the shore, our anchors took the ground: it was a bold rocky looking country, with a range of high mountains in the distance; on the beach we could perceive the crew and passengers, who beckoned us to land, but in mere mockery, for they had taken our only boat, had we been capable of managing one.

My companions, half frantic at their desperate condition, determined, in spite of all the remonstrances from me, to slip the cables, which they did, and we again drifted towards the shore. Fortunately, it was steep, and when we struck, we were not 20 yards distant; but how ere we to get on land?

The mate, who had been only suffering from a slight fever, and was now well, at length, at my suggestion, swam to the shore with a rope end which was fastened to a rock, and the other the crew made fast to the shrouds of the main rigging; upon this a noose was formed, reaching to the gunwale, in which my companions, with the exception of those in the launch, seated themselves, and were drawn by another rope to the shore.

With the assistance of the cook, I, with immense exertion, placed myself in the noose. As I was drawn from the gunwale, I swung round, and caught the look and expression of the poor old Italian gentlemen in the launch—it was so despairing, so mournful, so reproachful, that I closed my eyes. I grew dizzy and weak, and as I drew near the shore, became utterly incapable of holding longer, and fell headlong into the sea.

As I rose to the surface, a seamen put forth an oar to me, which I grasped, and was in that manner drawn to land, which I had no sooner reached, than I sank senseless.

When I came to myself, I found my companion seated beside me, who said, 'Before I quitted the vessel, I was going to your cabin, for the purpose, if possible, of rousing you to accompany me; but on my way I met the

commander, who told me he had just left it, and that you were dead, and, villain as he is, I must do him the justice to believe he thought you were so. When, however, I still persisted in going to decide for myself, he intimated that if I did not forthwith step into the boat, he would push off. I was obliged to comply, but it was only with the hope that I should be able to again visit the vessel; that hope vanished when we approached the shore, for the boat struck a rock and stranded, one of the passengers being drowned. But look', added he turning quickly to me, 'at the *Esperito Santo*—you are out of her in time.'

Until now, she had remained beating heavily against the rocks; suddenly she surged heavily over to leeward, the masts snapped off from the boards, three or four heavy seas curled up and swept over her, and the long boat, with its inmates, the dead and living, was first torn from the deck, and quickly disappeared; the poor wretches must have sunk without an effort, for we could not obtain a glimpse of them.

It now became necessary to hold a consultation as to our future movements. Two Turks approached from a distance, and on enquiring, we learnt from them that, in place of Rhodes, the vessel was wrecked on the coat of Karamania, near Castle Rossa, and about seventy miles from that island. They also told us that there was no village nearer than six miles, and to this it was determined we should proceed.

I was dreadfully weak; my clothes were thoroughly drenched, I had received several bruises, and the tumour under my arm felt very painful. When the proposal was first made, I did not think I could have walked ten yards; however, my friend very kindly took charge of my money, which I had fortunately saved by binding it round my waist, and we set forwards: the four infected persons and myself forming a separate group, which kept aloof from the rest.

About sunset we reached the village, and there met a person belonging to the Russian consulate; to him our commander addressed himself, stating that he and his companions had been wrecked that day on the coast, and entreating for shelter and protection, until intelligence of our situation could be communicated to our consul at Rhodes; not a word was mentioned respecting the plague.

Learning, however, we had come from Alexandria, and not being willing, although Turks, to encounter any risk, as they knew the plague was raging there, a dwelling was provided for us at a short distance from the town. The commander, and such as remained healthy, took possession of one room, while the infected occupied the another; the latter he wished me to join, but

this I refused. Notwithstanding the fatigue of my walk, I felt better, and did not despair of recovery; the chance of which would, however, have been much lessened had I complied with his wishes.

Accordingly, I made a separate bargain with a Turk, who allowed me to sleep in his stable, where several horses were kept; from him also I purchased a ragged carpet, and a large stone for a pillow. I took up my quarters in my new abode.

My fever increased as the night advanced. About two hours after midnight, I was seized with delirium, which I imagine was the crisis of the disorder: a thousand horrid and absurd vagaries passed through my brain; now the frantic wretch who was cut from the yard seized my leg with his teeth and gnawed the quivering flesh to the bone—now the Italian we left in the launch clasped his cold and clammy arms around me, and pressed me, with a demon's laugh, to his loathsome person.

I preserve, however, a recollection of at one period much shouting and noise, and also a party with torches had rushed into the shed, but for what purpose I knew not until the next morning.

I recovered my senses shortly after sunrise, and learnt from my companion that a disturbance had taken place during the night in consequence of the cook, who was delirious, crawling into the fire, which had been kindled to dress some provisions; his legs were most dreadfully burnt before they could rescue him, as no one would venture to touch him, and the party who entered my apartment came to seek for a rope to throw over him: about an hour afterward he died, and was buried by the Turks.

Suspicions now arose in the minds of the inhabitants as to the real state of the case, and nothing was heard but threats that they would massacre the whole party. Mine was spoken of as a most suspicious case, and a party came to examine me; what they saw confirmed their fears, and already were the muskets of several ferocious and sanguinary Turks, eager for a pretext to shed the blood of a Christian, levelled at me, when an old moolah interfered:

'Stop!' said he; 'I see it written on his forehead that his time has not yet come'.

As the Turks, disappointed of their prey, turned sulkily away, and quitted the shed, the old man, after fixing on me a look at once expressive both of pity and benevolence, approached, and enquired if there was anything he could do for my comfort, or to lessen my sufferings. I begged for water, which was all I craved: he placed a jar beside me, and then left me.

In the evening he sent his wife with similar offers of service. After much expostulation and entreaty, the captain and his party prevailed on the governor to keep all quiet, until an answer should be received from Castle Rossa, to which a letter, explaining our situation, was immediately conveyed. The perils of their situation were great, for the governor had but to hold up his finger, and they would cease to exist. This danger, added to the plague, rendered my condition still less enviable. I passed another miserable night.

Next day we received intelligence that a consular agent from Castle Rossa had arrived, but as he would not land, the whole party marched down to the beach where the wreck occurred. Being heartily disgusted with my companions, who, it soon became evident, were only desirous to keep us with them that we might defray the whole of the expenses, I endeavoured to persuade him, by the offer of a large sum, to furnish a boat, which would be taken forthwith by ourselves to Rhodes, but could only obtain a promise that a boat on the following day would be sent to carry the whole party there; having made this promise, the officer put off from the shore, and made sail for his port.

The Turks who had accompanied us to the beach, now turned a deaf ear to all our solicitations to be permitted to return to the village, but marched us off for about two miles to a little patch of greensward surrounded by thickets:

'These are your quarters' said the leader of the party.

Remonstrance would have been useless, and indeed in our situation, we could hardly hope for other treatment. Guards were stationed around, and it was intimated, in very plain terms, that anyone attempting to quit that circle would be shot without ceremony.

Myself and the other infected were directed to occupy one corner; our lodging and bedding was the damp earth; our canopy the scanty foliage of a dwarfish oak and the blue vault of heaven. The Turks now sent us a sheep, which was killed, and after some pieces had been broiled on the fire, they were thrown to us; eat, however, I could not—I loathed the sight of food.

In the evening it began to rain, which continued incessant during the whole time we remained.

I will not attempt to describe the miseries I endured for those two days. Hitherto, since quitting the vessel, I had not slept for an instant; but on the second night, I contrived to crawl near a fire, which an old Frenchman, in spite of the rain, had contrived to keep in: he did not repulse me. The fever still continued, and I was now so completely exhausted, that I sank into a

doze, which continued for about an hour. It had been my wish to dry my only pair of stockings, and I had gone to sleep with them in my hands extended over the fire. When I awoke, I found I had completely burnt the foot off one of them.

Crawling back to my own quarters, I carried with me a few embers, with which I contrived, with much difficulty, to dig a hollow, and with some of the Frenchman's store of wood, to light a small fire. All happiness they say, is by comparison; and as I warmed my benumbed fingers by its cheerful flame and sipped a little coffee, contained in a cooking pot which belonged to the man who had died last night, I poured forth my whole soul in gratitude to my Maker, who had thus far preserved me.

On the following day, the boat arrived which was to convey us to Rhodes. It was a miserable looking affair, but I shall never forget the pleasure I felt when I put my foot aboard her. I was then sufficiently recovered for my fellow passengers not to feel apprehension of my conveying the contagion, but two other patients were towed astern in a small boat. Owing to adverse winds, we were three day in making Rhodes, and as we had but one day's provisions when we left, the crew and the passengers were nearly starved: even I as we approached the island, began to feel pangs of hunger.

Upon our arrival, we were put in quarantine, the acme of a traveller's dread and misery, to us it was an earthly paradise. We had bedding, a roof to cover us, and a fire. From the time we were wrecked until we arrived at Rhodes (seven days), I neither ate nor (beyond the brief slumber I have noticed) slept. I had no clothes than those in which I had quitted the vessel. That I should have escaped the awful visitation would, in itself, be a subject of wonder; but that I should have done so under the complicated miseries and privations described, is next to miraculous.

It only remains for me to add, that the two patients who arrived with me at Rhodes died two days after landing; and I am, therefore, the sole survivor of those who were attacked. After remaining twenty-nine days in quarantine, gradually recovering my strength and health, I sailed for England, and here you see me now, very grateful to Providence for conducting me to my native land, and not much the worse for the perils I underwent on the way there."

Thus concluded my friend's narrative.

Asiatic Journal, May–August 1838

Venomous sea-snakes (*hydrus colubrinus* of Linn)

Mr Bland, surgeon of H. M. ship *Wolf*, has published in the Madras *Spectator*, a case of death, arising from the bite of a sea-snake, in the Madras Roads. The snake coming along-side, was hooked on board with a boat-hook, by one of the men, when Mr. Hyman, a mate belonging to H. M. Wolf (a fine young man, twenty-one years of age), took hold of the animal: which seized his left-hand, over the metacarpal bone of the index finger, and held fast the doubled-up skin, until taken away by force.

He went down to breakfast, soon after which he became slightly sick and giddy, felt considerable uneasiness in his throat, which began to swell, became unable to articulate, insensible, and died exactly three hours after he was bitten.

"A few exceedingly small punctures were seen on the hand, and two medical gentlemen saw the patient not long after the accident (not until the symptoms shewed themselves); but so rapid and fatal was the poison, that very little time was left for any remedy to take effect.

Immediately after death, the throat became discoloured, the body covered with dark spots, and in a few hours so offensive, that it was necessary to have it buried the same afternoon.

The snake was preserved; it was six feet six inches in length, six inches in girth at the vent, its thickest part, from whence ran the compressed tail, like the blade of an oar, by which the reptile swims; general colour yellow, with forty-three narrow black bands or rings, nearly equi-distant, from head to tail; both jaws and palatine arches well furnished with small arcuated teeth; many of the back teeth broken and decayed, apparently from age.

The snake is the *coluber laticaudatus* of Linn; the same that Shaw names the *hydrus colubrinus*, plentiful all over the Indian ocean, Straits of Malacca, and the bays and rivers of India.

As venomous snakes are known by having insulated fangs in front of the upper jaws, it has been supposed that those who have no pierced fangs are not venomous; there is, however, good reason to doubt the correctness of this opinion, and in the above serious case, where no fangs were present, a direct proof to the contrary. All are furnished with a maxillary gland for secreting poisonous fluid; and it is now well known, that the molar or back teeth are furnished with grooves, which would readily convey poison. And to strengthen this opinion it may be here mentioned, that a tribe of snakes, spread all over India, called rock snakes, and whose mouth and jaws are formed like the non-venomous, have been discovered lately to have the first maxillary tooth furnished with a tube for transmitting poison."

Drugged Snakes

"Lieut. Hutton states that the snakes which the Indian jugglers handle with impunity are drugged with opium, which renders them quiet and harmless.

He purchased one, eight and a half feet long, of a juggler, who threw it round his neck, and for a fortnight or three weeks after, he continued to handle it without injury; but when the effect of the drug wore off, the snake sprung at him as he was offering it water, and narrowly missed strangling him."

Cholera

Oude,—Extract of a letter from Lucknow, dated 8th September, 1842

"The cholera which made such a havoc at Lucknow, has almost disappeared there; when at its height, it carried off from one thousand to twelve hundred people daily, but its ravages are more plainly seen in the district. Several persons have died from the epidemic in the cantonments at Lucknow; four persons from the dawk office were attacked yesterday, three of whom expired shortly after."

Epidemic in Bengal

We are indebted to a gentleman of Calcutta for the following extracts describing a fearful disease which has swept off multitudes of the natives of that city and at Murshedabad and Jessore. We would particularly call attention of our readers to the conduct of the Brahmins on the melancholy occasion, and we will add, in spite of misanthropic slanderers of British morality, to that of our countrymen. We recite the opinions of various correspondents respecting the cause of the disorder.

The Jessore Disease (cholera morbus)

Epidemic: A great diversity of opinion seems to prevail, respecting the probable cause of the epidemic which has lately committed such ravages at Jessore and Calcutta; and, as we are sorry to learn all over the Zillah of Rajeshy. A respectable contemporary is of opinion, that although the species of food to which it is charged, when taken in excessive degree, may produce considerable derangement in the system, yet that they are not sufficient to account for the rapid progress of the disease, and the suddenness of its termination in death.

He adds, that the extreme heat at this season of the year, the want of free ventilation in native towns, the local situation of Jessore surrounded by jungle and luxuriant vegetation, and sheets of water, which, from the late heavy falls of rain, cover the surface of the ground, combined together, seemed to have given a virulent character to the disorder, which has probably been increased by some peculiarities in the atmosphere.

This disorder has also made its appearance near Murshedabad, where, in some of the villages, from ten to fifteen of the natives are carried off daily. It is described as similar to the mortality at Jessore; and the patient is said to die in a few hours.

A fact is also stated by the writer of a letter from Murshedabad, from which we may infer that the sable-fish (*Anoplopoma Fimbria*) have contributed to produce the disorder in that neighbourhood. It is said that at a fishing place for the sable-fish, twenty-five fishermen died in one day.

The disorder, says another writer, owed its origin to the deleterious qualities of new rice; and consisted in the fatal effects resulting from the use of paddy, recently cut, as food, before the grain had time to season through age and exposure to the sun. The symptoms, in every instance, we are informed by our correspondent, were precisely similar, being very sudden in their attack, and alarming in their appearance and result.

A few hours after the admission of this unwholesome, or rather poisonous food, into the stomach, the patients were seized with general uneasiness over the body, accompanied with violent head-ache and giddiness, succeeded by insensibility, profuse and cold perspirations, at the same time breaking out on the forehead and different parts of the body. To these incipient symptoms, in rapid succession, followed repeated vomiting of a clear liquid resembling water, gripings and purging, accompanied with sinking of the pulse, and its total extinction at the wrist and temples; together with spasms of the superior and inferior extremities, hollowness of the eyes, a falling in of the abdomen, and general emaciation visible even in subjects who previous to the attack were remarkable for the robustness and stoutness of their bodies.

Upon the first appearance of this disorder, the native inhabitants declared their total ignorance of any cause to which it could be referred excepting a visitation of Providence, and under the influence of a real or pretended panic fled with the utmost precipitation into the neighbouring villages, leaving the bazaar at Jessore wholly deserted for several days.

At length the servants of a gentleman who were attacked confessed that the disorder in them had arisen from eating new rice, of which it appears the natives are extremely fond, from the richness and sweetness of its taste; and

the lower classes in particular indulge freely in its use, on account of its comparative cheapness of price. Since then, various enquiries which have been set on foot, and examinations made of persons attacked by their friends, have fully established the fact of the disorder having been produced by the cause which has been mentioned.

The origin of the disorder having been ascertained, and the cause fully explained to the natives, the number of new cases almost instantaneously decreased; and by the unmerited and humane exertions of the judge, in restraining, so far as was possible, the employment of the pernicious article, and rigorously preventing its sale to the convicts, the distemper has nearly disappeared, and was removed from the jail in less than forty-eight hours, although the number of cases had there previously increased to an alarming extent.

In some cases, death followed the commencement of the symptoms in three or four hours, but in general the fatal result was prolonged to about twenty-four hours from the beginning of the attack. Dissection of the body, we are informed, exhibited an appearance of inflammation affecting the internal coats of the stomach and intestines, the latter being also inflated, and the former containing a quantity of offensive vitiated bile, but no traces of rice which had been swallowed.

The greatest number of those who fell victims to the fatal effects of gratifying their palates, though at risk of the most dangerous consequences, in great measure suffered from their own obstinacy in pertinacious refusing to have recourse to any excepting Bengali medicine, till it was too late.

But we are much gratified from hearing that a vast number of lives have been saved, and by means of a very simple practice; the free use of calomel

[a mercury compound] administered upon the first appearance of the symptoms, and continued so long as the presence of the disorder rendered the remedy necessary.

One case, a young stout man, belonging to the sepoy guard, in whom the pulse had ceased, and the patient in a state to all appearance lifeless, was recovered by the free exhibition of a mixture of ether and ammonia, which having the effect of rousing the nearly extinguished vital spark, the cure was completed almost miraculously with the calomel, accompanied with occasional small doses of opium.

We are happy having it within our power to communicate the foregoing important information to our readers, as it may serve to remove all apprehensions of infection being present in similar circumstances, and conveys

the mode of treatment that may successfully be adopted for the symptoms, than which none in any disease can be more alarming or frightful.

In the present instance, about one hundred and fifty deaths are supposed to have occurred in the short space of twelve days, and it is imagined three or four hundred in the whole have been affected, without a single European being included in the number. It seems the natives very reluctantly admitted the cause of the disorder to exist in the use of new rice, the reason of which appears that from its cheapness it is considered an improper food for those respectable for their wealth and consequence, and being fully aware of its pernicious effects, they maintained none but such as were driven from necessity would employ it for food. Several of the higher classes have however perished, and the cause of the disorder is placed beyond the possibility of doubt.

There is no instance, we believe, of any disease so rapid and fatal in its course when left to itself, which has so successfully been combated by medicine, as the one in question; and from all that we can learn it would appear that almost any stimulant, if given within two or three hours of the first attack, or before the pulse sinks, has the power of arresting the disease.

While we deplore the loss of life occasioned by this pestilence, it is gratifying to know the impression made on the natives by the zealous humanity of their English friends in so promptly affording every possible assistance, and which we have heard from various quarters calls forth their most grateful admiration.

The following directions were drawn up by the surgeon in Jessore, and circulated through the district during the continuation of this fatal disease. This document has been translated into Bengali for the benefit of the natives, who, though adverse to the use of medicine were at length so thoroughly convinced of its efficacy that they received the instructions and remedy with every appearance of satisfaction and gratitude.

All the facts connected with the origin and progress of this destructive disorder that have come to light, tend, we understand, to confirm in the most satisfactory manner the cause which is assigned, and had been so happily ascertained. We should think ourselves deficient in that duty which we feel to every deserving individual, were we not to record that the pains taken by the intelligent person in charge of the medical duties at Jessore to accomplish this desirable object, have not only been very great, but crowned with complete success.

We congratulate our readers upon this happy and timely discovery, as it may serve eventually to illustrate the cause of diseases hitherto deemed epidemic, which generally prevail in the lower parts of Bengal at this season of the year.

In the present instance, the origin of the disorder marked with features distinguishing epidemics of the worst description, seems established beyond reach of doubt; and therefore it becomes more a circumstance of fact than of mere suspicion, that the deleterious and unwholesome nature of the food made use of by the natives in the months immediately succeeding the rains contributes more to the production of these lamentable calamities than any other causes generally assigned; such as the rapid increase of vegetation, stagnation of water, and intense heat of the weather, to which they have generally been ascribed. Besides the liberal exhibition of calomel and opium, it is important to mention, that the volatile mixture, containing ammonia and ether, had, in the most deplorable stage of the disorder, contributed very materially to the success which has attended the practice employed in the treatment of the Jessore disease.

Directions for using the accompanying medicines in cases of the disease, at present prevailing in the district of Jessore

This disorder is cholera morbus of a very violent description, and if not relieved, destroys the patient in about twenty-four hours, frequently in much shorter time, from the commencement of the attack. Its origin seems entirely to consist in the use of new rice [known as] ouse crops as food, and unless the employment of this pernicious article be restricted, it cannot be expected that the disease will decrease.

To diminish the ravages of this afflicting disorder, it is therefore particularly recommended to point out to the natives the cause, and by so doing put within their own power the means of putting a stop to its progress; for without this precaution, medicine will, it is evident, prove of little avail.

The accompanying pills have been found of very considerable use in relieving the symptoms. As soon as a patient is seized, if above the age of fourteen years, let him or her swallow immediately two of the white pills, No. 1; and if they have no effect, let one more be administered in the course of an hour afterwards, and a fourth in about four hours from the administration of the third dose.

Should the vomiting be excessive, let one of the black pills, No. 2, accompany each administration of the preceding. It is, however, to be distinctly understood, that unless the remedies be taken in the course of two or three hours from the commencement of the attack, experience has proved their exhibition to be attended with very limited success; at the same time, even in that advanced period of the disorder, their use should be persisted in, examples having occurred where, the patient has been recovered by the employment of the medicine.

If the person affected be under the age of fourteen, one white pill at a time must be administered, and half of a black one. N.B. Each of the white pills contains four grains of calomel, and the black, one grain of opium each; the patient making use of them must therefore be careful to abstain from bathing, and avoid dampness of every description.

Cure for the Cholera

Captain Wallace, of the Presidency, has published the following cure for the cholera:

"Two tea-spoonfuls of strong decoction of cloves, cinnamon, and spice; one tea-spoonful of red pepper; one tea-spoonful of black pepper; sixty drops of laudanum; to be put into a large claret glass, which fill two-thirds full of brandy or arrack, then add boiling hot water sufficient to make the dose as hot as the patient can conveniently take it.

One half of the above dose to be given, and if retained, no more will be required; if rejected, of course to be repeated.

To a strong person, the whole of the above dose may be given; in cases of children, the dose must be reduced according to their age.

Major Wallace mentions that some grated nutmeg should be put in the dose. The greatest care will be necessary in purging the patient with castor oil.

A correspondent in the *Bombay Gazette* speaks of the extraordinary effect of this medicine given in desperate cases; adding: "I have no doubt, unless followed by doses of castor oil, the medicine would, in many cases, produce fatal consequences."

A letter from Mr. C. Stuart, the civil surgeon at Raujeshy, near Murshedabad, gives us the following information on the subject of the epidemic in that quarter.

As a similar complaint to that prevailing in Jessore has been committing great ravages amongst the natives in this Zillah, and will probably extend to other parts of the country, perhaps it may be of use to inform the public that a large dose of laudanum, if taken at the commencement, will stop the progress of it, and allow time for the administration of other medicines.

I am in the habit of giving it in the following form, viz.:

Magnesia 20 grains, Laudanum from 80 to 100 drops, according to the violence of the symptoms. Essence of peppermint 5 drops, Water two table spoons full.

A few hours after the sickness, &c. have ceased, I prescribe small doses of Epsom salts, every quarter of an hour, until they operate freely. And at the end of two or three days, a dose of calomel at night, and one of salts in the morning, which generally effect the cure. With the exception of a sepoy who was seized in the middle of the night, and whose extremities were cold when I saw him, I have not lost a single patient to whom I was called within four hours after the first attack.

Out of the thirty-four cases in the jail, not one has proved fatal; though many of the men had the worst symptoms of it. My native doctor has furnished me with the names of twenty-five people whom he recovered in the bazaar by the same means. I have visited the native huts in the town of Nattore, and made very particular enquiries, but cannot find that those who have died had any other symptoms but what properly belong to cholera morbus; no sort of fever precedes the attack.

The patients certainly complain afterwards of burning heat, and excessive thirst, to which I conceive ought to be set down to exhaustion occasioned by the violent spasmodic action of the whole alimentary canal.

The pulse, in the beginning, is scarcely disturbed, but soon become quick, small and sharp; it returns however nearly to the natural standard, directly the spasms abate. The mortality at one time was truly alarming, but I am happy to state that the deaths are now daily decreasing. When the casualties were very numerous, the judge, at my suggestion, issued a proclamation, recommending two grains of opium to be taken immediately upon the first attack, and after the symptoms had abated, a dose of any kind of aperient.

I have since heard, that many who strictly attended to these directions recovered. The rains have been exceedingly heavy hereabouts, and the inundation unusually high this year. I believe the town of Nattore, in the course of last month, was nearly under water, and soon afterwards we had very hot weather. A hot moist atmosphere and the immoderate use of sable fish appear to me to have been the principal causes of the disease.

The following demi-official account of the measures adopted is from the Government gazette:

It will be satisfactory to the public to be informed, that the benevolent attention of the Government has been directed to the fatal epidemic disease which has for some time past prevailed in the town and in the suburbs of Calcutta, and that means have been adopted which have in a very eminent degree proved effectual in counteracting its ravages.

The measures from which so much benefit is derived are under the general superintendence of Mr. Eliot and Mr. Blacquiere, and have been devised and brought into operation by those zealous magistrates in communication with the Medical Board.

Although the prevailing disease, which is cholera morbus, if permitted to run its course is frequently fatal in a few hours, and some times in a few minutes, yet in most instances its progress may be arrested, and the patient saved, by means that are not only simple but of easy application. Those means are supplied under the direction of the medical board from the public stores; and a large proportion of the native physicians of the town and suburbs are employed to administer them, according to written instructions with which they had severally been furnished. They are stationed at different places, under the immediate superintendence of the police, by which every requisite assistance is rendered to them; and they make regular reports of their proceedings to Mr. Eliot and to Mr. Blacquiere. It is somewhat remarkable that the native physicians entered into these measures without difficulty or hesitation, and are extremely assiduous in discharging the duties with which they have been entrusted. The native inhabitants, to whom intimation was given in the different streets to apply for aid, showed, even at first, not for a few instances of any aversion to the benefits held out to them; and after having witnessed the speedy relief afforded, they are now for the most part earnest and pressing in their applications for speedy assistance.

These benevolent efforts to oppose the prevailing epidemic very seldom fail of success, if employed at an early stage of the disease. Much pains have been taken to impress the natives with the importance of this fact, and a knowledge of it now in most cases seems to influence their conduct. The cures daily reported are accordingly very numerous, and for some days past the general mortality has not greatly exceeded its usual limits at the present season, as appears by a record of that of former years which is at the police office.

The approaching change of season will probably render it unnecessary to persevere for any considerable length of time, in the system of measures which has been adopted to combat the present epidemic. Independently, however, of the immediate gratification to humanity which must arise from the benevolent interference of the government on the present occasion, it must be interesting to contemplate the impression which the minds of the natives will probably receive from that care and solicitude in respect of their welfare which that interference so strikingly manifests.

September 27th [1818]: We have great satisfaction in stating, that the epidemic, which has occasioned so much mortality in various districts of

Bengal, and which ten days ago was so prevalent in the suburbs and vicinity of Calcutta, has much abated, and has been most successfully combated by medicine wherever it has appeared.

September 29th [1818]: We are much concerned to find that the epidemic which has committed such ravages in Bengal has extended to Behar, where its effects appear to have been more fatal. We have been favoured with an account of it from a gentleman at Chuprah, who, though not of the faculty, has administered aid to all those around him with great success, affording a gratifying proof how much may be effected by zeal and humanity, with the simplest means, in arresting the progress of this disease. In his point of view we consider the communication the more generally interesting.

Extract from a letter from Chuprah, 22 September [1818]

The most alarming mortality now prevails here from this epidemic, of which you have heard so much. Nor is it confined to Chuprah, but extends to Dinapore and Patna, and some other large towns. I have not heard of any deaths among the villagers. Our courts are shut as well as the shops of the town, which is deserted by the better sort of natives, by all who can afford to move.

During the first four days of the disease, eighty-four deaths occurred in one bazaar. The reports for the 19th and 20th give the number of deaths at 56 for the former, and 49 for the latter day. This morning the report for the 20th is sixty-one.

The disease comes on with purging and vomiting and profuse perspiration, followed by cold sweats, and sometimes terminating in death in the short space of two hours from the first attack. Such was the fate of a fine tall stout fellow in my service. I have in many cases given medicine with much success, chiefly opium in quantities of two or three grains (the letter here goes on to state various particulars as to the sickness in different native families).

Mr. Moorcroft, on hearing that the disease prevailed here, immediately came over, and has been administrating to all within his reach with the greatest kindness and humanity. Every arrangement has been made to arrest the progress of the disease, but I do not believe that it is contagious. Proclamation has been made that medicine will be supplied to all who may apply.

The sale of fish has been prohibited. Brahmans and Musalmans have been entertained to assist the sick of different casts, and native writers are employed to take down notes of all the particular circumstances attending the disease. We have not had a drop of rain for upwards of a month, and the heat is excessive, attended with heavy dews at night. The high price of provisions

has probably induced the poorer classes to have recourse to bad food. I have heard of no one being taken ill in the villages around. At Ghazipore they had rain on the 16th, and there both natives and Europeans were well. The disease has not reached Arrah, but from what I can learn is quite as bad as at Dinapore and Patna as here.

From a letter of the 23rd[1818]—I was sorry to learn last night that the disease had got to Revelgunge. To-day most of the cases come from the westward. In this neighbourhood there have been few casualties. The number of deaths in this day's report is thirty-eight. I have not lost a patient, though I have administered to a great many poor creatures. We hear the casualties at Patna are from fifty to a hundred a day, and that the disease has shown itself at Hadgipore. I heard yesterday from Tirhoot, where they suffered beyond all example from heat, but no mention is made of sickness. Yesterday out of sixty cases brought to Mr. Moorcrof he lost only three, and in these the disease was too far gone before they applied.

P.S. We have at last, thank God, had a shower.

The disease having shown itself at Chuprah after so long a drought, and in Bengal, in the midst of continued rains, sets at defiance all theories resting on the state of moisture or dryness of the atmosphere.

It is satisfactory to find from the following statement, which has appeared in the *Government Gazette*, that the casualties from the disease are now much reduced in Calcutta. Between the 19th and 30th of September [1818] there were 3169 cases, of which 343 died.

October: We have much pleasure in being able to state, that the disease which has been prevalent for upwards of a fortnight at the station of Jessore and its vicinity, has within the last week greatly diminished. This beneficial change, we understand, is solely to be ascribed to the cause of the disorder having happily been ascertained by the prompt exertions employed by the magistrate in consequence, and the judicious and effectual measures made use of by him to prevent its continuance.

We regret to mention, that since writing the above we have learned that in those parts of Jessore, where from the alarm not having reached, the new crops of rice continue to be used as food, the disorder rages with unabated activity. But at the date of our last accounts, in consequence of every precaution practicable being employed to restrict the natives in the enjoyment of this pernicious food, the disease had almost totally disappeared at the station, and the natives who had previously fled from Casbah were again pouring into the bazaar in numbers from adjacent villages, where they consider

themselves less secure than in the town which had been deserted by them a few days before.

We are sorry to state that a Mr. John Deverell had died on the 4th instant; his complaint was very similar to that which is destroying the natives. The cause of his death was not ascertained, supposed to have arisen from swallowing a quantity of salts dissolved in lime juice, which occasioned an inflammation of the bowels.

In addition to the above causes we have to observe, that although we entertain no doubts that the use of the new rice was the cause of the disorder in Jessore, yet we have reason to believe that the mortality so prevalent in Calcutta and its environs was produced by the use of other ailments equally deleterious. The great plenty of sable fish at this season, but above all its extreme cheapness, has occasioned its becoming the almost daily food of the greater portion of the labouring natives; and being a fish which soon corrupts, it is generally eaten by that description of people when in the first stage of putrescence, a circumstance which cannot fail to render it as an article of diet highly pernicious and unwholesome.

Whether the disorder originated in the immoderate use of this fish or not is a question on which much diversity of opinion exists, yet we think that it at least contributed to the aggravation of its symptoms may be admitted; since its ravages have been confined with few exceptions to the poorer classes of the community. We have, however, the satisfaction to remark, that the mortality which attended its progress has in great measure subsided, an evident demonstration that the disorder is on the decline.

Ola Bebee (Our Lady of the Flux) versus Kali Devi

We have now to describe the monstrous stratagem of the Brahmans in Calcutta to impose upon the people a new deity, for the purpose of swelling the coffers of the votaries of Kali. The disposition of the unfeeling part of mankind to turn to advantage any occurrence of public or private misfortune, was never, perhaps, more strongly exemplified than at present, and never was craft so wickedly and so shamelessly exerted to wring contributions from the poor.

The information which has reached us, we are sorry to say, evinces that the mortality which has prevailed, may, in a great degree, be attributed to the wicked artifices of those who have taken advantage of the ignorance and superstition of the lower classes of the community; to the schemes of wretches, who, by the prostration of the mind, have contributed to produce the mischiefs to the person against which they have pretended to insure the infatuated sufferers.

It may be amusing to some of your readers, and perhaps useful to mention the mode in which the Brahmans of Calcutta and its vicinity have turned the present prevalence of sickness to account.

The device which has been employed to alarm the natives in the vicinity of Calcutta, is that of a newly created deity whose temple had been opened at Kidderpore, as the Ola Bebee, where those who wished to avert her dreadful visitation were required to sacrifice and make offerings. *Ola* means descent and *oot'ha* ascent. In medical language ola is used for flux and *ola oot'ha* for cholera morbus, aptly enough, and by a pretty obvious etymology. It seems, however, that in the prolific family of the Hindu pantheon a new set of beings has of late been generated, whose jurisdiction is almost as fully acknowledged by the lower class of Musalmans, and some called Christians, as by their own more proper subjects. One of the most recent births in this family is that of *Ola Bebee*, or Our Lady of the Flux.

Her immediate parentage is indeed obscure, but although it might be difficult to trace in her title any claim of affinity to the longer established divinities, it seems her power is sufficient to enable her to contend successfully with one of the mightiest of them, and to attack Kali Devi herself in the persons of her votaries and special protégées, the inhabitants of the city of Calcutta.

The cause of the quarrel I have not heard; but it has become necessary to seek for protection at the shrine of each of the contending powers, which could only be obtained by the usual ceremonies of propitiation. Kali has declared that she will interpose her special protection against the malice of Ola to every one who will eat Salao fish at her shrine; and in consequence of this promise the road to Kalighat has been crowded with devotees for the last four or five days.

Others who wish to be doubly sure, first pay a visit to a newly constructed image of Ola Bebee at Kiddapore, where they endeavour to avert her rage by liberal offerings, and thence proceed to eat the prescribed food at Kalighat. There is not a doubt that so long a journey in the sun has actually brought on the disease it was undertaken to avert; and many females, especially, have proved victims to their credulous superstition.

It would appear that the rival deities were not satisfied with the offerings which they had respectively received, and that further measures were necessary to impress their worshippers with a proper notion of their power, during this season of mortality.

Kali, to support her authority, caused a circular to be promulgated, and in a mode calculated to give it publicity, which perhaps has not been equalled

by the ingenuity of any European: and the effect of it, on the native population of Calcutta, has certainly been much greater than that of the circular of Lord Sidmouth, which has recently been much discussed.

The following we believe to be a literal translation of this extraordinary document.

Sri! Sri! The divine Mother Kali's commands

The disease of Ola-oot'ha has seized numbers of people. Therefore amongst women such as are heads of families, or men, will go to Kali-g'haut and worship according to their means, and bathe in the sacred Old-Gunga. Thus they shall escape Ola-oot'ha. Whoever shall contemn this order, his family shall be seized with Ola-oot'ha. Instantly on the receipt of this you are to write three copies of it and to distribute them in three places. He or she who does not distribute these three copies shall be afflicted with Ola-oot'ha.

Dated 29th of Bhadoor (12th September) [1818]

The circulation of the proclamation, on the part of Kali-ma, which enjoined this observance was ingeniously provided for. It was the express duty of each individual to write three copies and distribute them in three different places. A subsidiary expedient was then resorted to, and a cowrie [shell] was left at the doors of several of the inhabitants in different quarters of the town, by some unknown agents of the goddess, with written instructions to convey it, with suitable donations, to the temple at Kali-ghaut, and to distribute three other cowries with similar instructions. Thus had the Brahmans formed a regular combination of devices to secure the success of their avaricious views, and the whole scheme appears to have been conducted with admirable cunning and vigilance.

We understand that the temple at Kali-ghaut has actually derived a very considerable profit from this disgraceful imposition. Such are the effects of superstition and ignorance.

Last week a respectable native was proceeding in the middle of the day, under a burning sun, to the sacred temple, in the hope of averting the displeasure of the goddess, but he was seized with illness on the road. He returned home, and died within a few hours. Many other devotees have perished under similar circumstances.

This order, we understand, was promptly obeyed by a great majority of those who received it, of whatever cast or race, Native Portuguese, Musalmans, and Chinese as well as Hindus. Numbers of poor old women, to whom the

circular was principally addressed, were seen tottering along the road on their pilgrimage to Kali-ghaut. The death of several of these unhappy creatures after having gone through the prescribed ceremonies and within a few yards of the temple, was not sufficient to open the eyes of the other victims of delusion, and the registers of mortality kept by the magistrates bear record of the fatal effects of the wretched superstition of the people!

Encouraged by the success of this device, the Brahmans, a few days afterwards, had recourse to another, with similar effects. A cowrie was left at the doors of several of the inhabitants in different quarters of the town by some unknown agents of the goddess, with written directions to carry it, along with other suitable donations to the temple at Kali-ghaut, and to distribute another three cowries with similar instructions. The magistrates unfortunately have not yet found any means of opposing these infamous acts; but there is every reason to hope that the rapid progress of education amongst the natives, principally, if not entirely ascribable to the exertions of the missionaries of Serampore, will secure the rising generation of the poor, from becoming, like their fathers, an easy prey to the cupidity of the cunning, avaricious and unfeeling priest craft.

Such, we understand, have been the exertions of Kali to preserve her pre-eminence; but Ola Bebee and her priests have not failed to adopt the boldest measures to maintain her influence on the minds of the terrified and distracted population. Were it not for the melancholy evidence, which our native country has afforded in the person of Johanna Southcote, we should hesitate to draw on the belief of our readers, by stating the following fact; but which we shall relate, nearly in the words in which we have the communication:

An actual *soi-disante* incarnation or Avatar of Ola Bebee appeared a few days ago at the village of Sulkeea. She sat there for two days in all the state of a Hindu goddess, having a young Brahamany to attend on her as priestess, she was reaping a rich harvest from the terror she had sown in the minds of people, when unfortunately her fame reached the ears of our indefatigable first magistrate.

Mr. Eliot gave orders to his native officers to seize her with her co-adjutor to his kucherie; which indeed they did, but not without much fear and trembling, and some artifice. They took it upon themselves to 'present the magistrate's respects to her goddess-ship and to request the honour of an interview'. She had not sufficient confidence in her own power to offer resistance and therefore affected a ready acquiescence.

The moment she got up to depart, the crowd who had assembled to worship, or from curiosity, fled in terror in all directions, and not a little

astounded were the native officers of the court to hear the worthy magistrate accuse her of imposture, and after hearing what she had to say for herself, commit her to the house of correction for six months!- Not perceiving, however, any marks of her vengeance for such an indignity, but hearing her, on the contrary, sue for mercy like any common criminal, the peons at length gathered courage to lay hands on her, and convey her to the place of punishment, where she is at present employed in pounding bricks for the benefit of the public, from whom she was so lately receiving peace offerings.

Though the very lowest classes are those on whom such impositions principally operate, there are some of the more wealthy Hindus who, from motives not very obvious, lend themselves to the support of the superstition on which they are founded. One specimen occurred a few days ago, which deserves to be mentioned:-

A wealthy Rajah of Calcutta though proper to dream, that he was a few nights ago accosted in his sleep by an elderly but very fierce looking lady, who introduced herself as the dreaded Ola Bebee. On enquiring what where her commands; she replied, 'my lamp wants oil'. This appearing rather enigmatical, the Probhoo requested her to be more explicit, she then said 'I have four dogs, they are hungry, they must be fed with human blood;' so saying she disappeared.

Next day the story was related to the neighbours, who with one accord lost no time in packing up their alls and flying from their homes.

We understand, from unquestionable authority, that the priests of the temple of Kali have circulated a proclamation among their followers, notifying that a reconciliation having been effected between the rival goddesses, the worshippers of that deity have nothing further to apprehend from the malevolence of Ola Bebee.

Asiatic Journal, May–June 1818

The Efficacy of Cautery in Diseased Spleen

***To the Editor of the Asiatic Journal*:**

Sir, In the last number of your valuable miscellany, on the subject of the late epidemic in Bengal and other parts of India, I perceived my name mentioned as having received benefit in an enlarged spleen from the application of the actual cautery; I not only derived benefit, but obtained a most speedy and perfect cure of that distressing malady by that very simple process. As the circumstance is of consequence and out to be better known, I think it right

to give a particular statement of the case, for the information of medical practitioners and benefit of the public in general; and that it may be more fully understood, I deem it necessary to state every circumstance which led to the formation of the disease in question; and though nearly half a century has elapsed since I was thus affected, yet I have as perfect a recollection of the whole as I could possibly have had it happened but yesterday.

I was appointed to a situation in a district to the south of Calcutta, called the twenty-four Pergunnahs, in the year 1770, to which I proceeded in the month of April. Perhaps there is not a spot upon the face of the globe more unhealthy than the southern parts of that district during the season of the rains.

My residence, in the first instance, was on the bank of a nullah or creek, which communicates with the Hougly River at the town of Fultah, and about twelve miles inland from that town. This creek was then dry, but on the setting in of the rains it soon filled and became navigable. This part of the country lays so low, that for several days during spring tides the whole face of the level become one complete inundation, nothing is to be seen but the trees, and the more elevated sites on which the villages stand, and the causeways of communication from village to village; and when the tide retires, it leaves the surface of the ground covered with slime and the spawn of fish, the latter so abundant, that observing the water so discoloured in a neighbouring ditch near my habitation, I put my hand in it to ascertain the cause, when I found it to proceed from myriads of young shrimps, which I strained through my fingers.

You may easily imagine what sort of an atmosphere must be produced from the exhalations arising from such a service under the influence of a tropical sun; the consequence was that all my servants, public and private, through natives of Calcutta, my cook and head bearer excepted, soon became ill, and many died; the escape of the two latter I attribute to their sleeping in the cook-room, and the rarefaction of the air by the constant fire kept up, for I know no other way of accounting for it.

In the midst of this scene of disease and mortality I remained for some time perfectly free from complaint, till towards the latter end of August; for, aware of the deadly nature of the climate, I took daily half a wine glass of tincture of bark with Madeira, and a dose of salts once a week.

My stock of tincture was at last exhausted, and I neglected to send for a fresh supply; when towards the latter end of August, about the full moon, I was attacked with universal pains in every joint of my body, with head ache and high fever, but not accompanied with great acceleration of pulse which

did not exceed ninety in a minute; my stomach was greatly oppressed, and I took the next morning an emetic of ipecacuanha; it acted copiously, and the contents of my stomach, with the remains of my meal of the former day, seemed to have been converted into one uniform mass of bile; this over I then took a dose of salts the same day, the consequence was, that the pains in my limbs left me, but my headache and fever continued unabated.

I repeated the same process the next day, and discharged an equal mass of bile as before; but the headache and fever remaining, I considered my case alarming and that a moment was not to be lost, and early next morning I put myself into a light covered boat, and fell down with the ebb to Fultah, where I met the flood, and it being a spring tide I was able to reach Calcutta that tide.

I was kindly received at the house of a friend, where I had the best medical aid and attention, and at the end of about a month, during the greater part of which I remained in a state of delirium and insensibility, I began to exhibit some symptoms of recovery; and in the month of October, after being reduced to a perfect skeleton I was enabled to quit my bed.

Still I continued in a state of the most deplorable debility, no appetite, and on taking food I was liable to severe colic, my legs swelled up to my knees in a few hours, and other parts became oedematous; the region of the stomach became unusually distended, and it was discovered on examination, that the spleen had become greatly enlarged, and could be felt to extend from the pit of my stomach to the short ribs, in shape and size like a large cucumber or plantain, attended with a dull headache and slow fever, which as the cold season advanced, changed into a regular tertian, but without the degree of profuse perspiration which usually attends the going off of the paroxysm, for I perspired but little; the anaxarcous state of my legs was generally absorbed in the night, and went off by a flow of urine, and occasionally in my sleep.

I ought to mention that some days previous to the first attack of fever in August, I had perceived a dull sensation of pain about the region of the left side, near the stomach, which I at the time attributed to indigestion, but which continued fixed to one particular spot, and I have no doubt at this moment, that the spleen was affected previously to the first access of bilious fever.

Various means were employed, both by medical men and native doctors, to remove this disease, but without success, and the cold season having set in, and the country become dry and healthy I left Calcutta in this miserable state, and returned to my station, where I was first taken ill, with my ague returning every other day, my legs swelled, my countenance the colour of a guinea, and in a state of the most deplorable debility.

It is proper to notice that an enlargement of the spleen is a very common disease in the lower parts of Bengal, sometimes produced by the bilious remitting fever, more frequently, as in my case, its attendant, and, as I was assured, by the natives, still oftener a distinct disease, attended with ague. Their common remedy, when other means fail, is that of actual cautery to the part, and you daily see hundreds of the lower classes, and many of superior rank, bearing the marks of that operation on their bodies.

Convinced, therefore, that the practice would not be so general with them unless experience had established its efficacy, I was determined to submit to the process.

The next thing was to find out an operator, but in this I found considerable difficulty; at last I fell upon the expedient of offering a reward of 50 rupees by beat of tom tom next market day, to any man who was in the habit of performing the operation, and would undertake it: this had the desired effect; and the next morning, at an early hour, a little old man presented himself with the necessary instruments for the purpose; these consisted of a special awl such as the leather workers use in that country, not sharp pointed, but somewhat like the instrument made use of by our joiners for making holes in deal. Boards for brads, an instrument used by the natives for paring their nails, a horn with a hole at the small end, and his cauterising instruments. Some of these (all in wooden handles) were fashioned somewhat in the shape of flattish hooks, the face of them about an inch and a quarter long, and not quite half an inch broad, and about twice the thickness of a wafer, and other were round headed, and very much both in shape and size resembled the nails used by our coach makers for fastening on the tires of wheels.

The chaffing dish was in the verandah with the kettle for breakfast, and he put his irons in the fire; he then made me strip and wanted me to be held; I assured him it was unnecessary, that my mind was made up, and he might depend upon it I would not flinch.

He then felt and examined the whole region of the stomach and abdomen; the spleen could be distinctly felt extending, as I have already stated, from the pit of my stomach diagonally to the short ribs, quite hard upon pressure, and having fully satisfied himself as to all points, he took out his horn and awl.

I asked him what he was going to do with the latter, when he told he was about to pierce through the integuments into the spleen itself, and draw blood from the part into the horn by suction, as long as it would flow; I objected to that part of the process, and observed to him that in my emaciated and debilitated condition, I apprehended mortification and death must be the

inevitable consequence; he assured me that he had done it to thousands in his time without a single instance of the kind, and that there was no danger; however, I would not run the hazard of the consequences.

He then proposed to scarify the skin over the part, to which I readily agreed, and pinching it up, he made three incisions with his other instrument close to each other, as in cupping, and calling for a cup he applied the horn to the part and by suction drew blood as long as it would flow, every now and then taking off the horn and letting it run into the cup, when he could extract no more, he then marked the parts where he meant to apply the cautery with common oil, and having so done, he then took the hook-like cautery which he applied directly over the centre of the spleen in three places; he next made use of the round headed one, and applied it to four parts at equal distances over the region of the stomach, the first just above the upper angle of the former, and the other three nearly in a direct line, the last of which was nearly over the edge of the ribs, on the right side.

The instruments were red hot and held on each time for about two seconds only; the pain was pretty sharp, but I kept my word and did not flinch in the least, and it was soon over.

The operation was performed on my well day: I expected my usual ague fit the next, but it did not come, nor did it ever return. The whole muscular region of the stomach and abdomen became inexpressibly irritable and sore, but did not show any external marks of inflammation; the axillary and inguinal glands on the left side became sore and enlarged, the tendon up my neck and the gland under my ear were similarly affected, and the tendon down my left thigh and leg to my ankle was likewise affected: the irritation of my body was so great that for some days I could only turn like a pivot, this went away in about a week.

I applied nothing to the burns; these produced little or no discharge and scarcely adhered to my shirt, and they dried up and peeled off in about a fortnight. He brought me a drink which he wished me to take, but on tasting it I found it so nauseous that I threw it away.

Such was the efficacy of this simple, though somewhat painful operation, that the spleen rapidly diminished and retreated to its former place, the inflated state of the region of the stomach as rapidly subsided, the oedematous swelling of my legs disappeared, a voracious appetite returned scarcely to be satisfied, my spirits which had been sunk and depressed revived, the yellow tinge of my skin vanished and my former healthy complexion returned; in short the effect was like magic. I can be under no mistake as to the time, for my return [to health] had become so strong and heavy, that being ordered to

another part of the country, I walked the greater part of the way, a distance of twenty-four miles, in boots, with my gun in my hand, amusing myself with shooting, my palanquin following me.

I returned to my station on the 22nd or 23rd November, and quitted it the last day of the year. You therefore see, Mr Editor, I did not merely obtain relief, as stated by your medical correspondent, but actually received a complete cure of all my complaints by the astonishing effects of this simple operation. I have stated nothing but the truth, which I am ready to attest at any time on oath; and I carry about me the indelible marks of it, which I have shown to many medical men to whom I have related the above particulars, and should any one from the faculty doubt the fact, I am equally ready to satisfy their curiosity.

Medical men may be better able to account for the surprising effect of this process than I can; my own opinion has always been that the active stimulus of fire gave energy to the absorbents which had become torpid and inert, that this stimulus restored their tone and action, and that nature did the rest. I agree with your correspondent that the use of cautery is but too much neglected in modern practice, and I have no doubt would be found useful in many cases which resist the common remedies; its utility is well understood in the east.

I know of an instance of a Zemindar who after a fever fell into dropsy and obtained a perfect cure by the cautery alone; he was an old man and I had the relation from himself. I see no reason why it should not be attended with equal success here, and I have the most perfect confidence that in asthma, dropsy of the chest and heart and many diseases of the liver, particularly in an enlargement of that organ, it would be found beneficial, and at any rate if it did no good I have no idea that it could do harm. It might likewise be found useful in pulmonary complains where blisters fail; for be assured Mr. Editor, that there is no comparison whatever between the stimulus of the former and the active energy of the cautery, the most powerful agent in nature.

In my case blistering was of no service whatsoever, and mercury was found rather to aggravate the disease, and therefore discontinued,

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant and constant reader,
Wm. Young.

Asiatic Journal 1818

Storm near Calcutta

The Bengal Hurkaru, April 10 [1838]

"A storm of great severity took place on the 8th April, in the vicinity of Calcutta. The storm was so strong at Khootghuttah point, on the new canal, that the depots standing there were blown down, destroying about 250 labourers.

The natives have been panic-struck. The labouring class say their last hope of at least a tolerable crop was destroyed by the shower of hail.

The destruction of life and property on the Salt-water Lakes, from the violence of the storm, was immense. At the salt-manufactory, belonging to Mr Prinsep, at Balliaghaut, and for a distance of two miles round, nothing was to be seen after the storm, but ruins of dwellings scattered about, and wrecks of boats floating in every direction.

Large boats of 5,000 mounds' burthen were either sunk or literally lifted out of the water on dry ground. Hail-stones fell at Dum-dum of an unusual size. Two, which were picked up, measured each sixteen inches in circumference, and better than five inches in diameter. Another piece, of an irregular form, measured full nine inches in length, and three inches in thickness."

A writer in the *Hurkaru,* of April 16, who was an eye-witness to the effects of the storm in and about Kodaliya, Changreepota, etc., villages five to six miles on the S. E. of Gurriya Ghaut, states:

"I went myself to visit those villages a day after the hurricane took place, and observed that it passed in southerly direction from Gurriya Ghaut, through the above villages, to as far as, it is said, Baneeadanga—destroying and sweeping in its course every thing within the breadth of nearly half a mile.

Largest trees have been torn up by the roots, and some broken in the trunk one three fathoms in circumference. Small trees, which are still standing, have been stripped of their branches and leaves. Houses, mud and brick, have been blown down, and under their ruins were buried their unfortunate inmates, men women, and children. The number of human beings lost is not precisely known, and the casualties in cattle are incalculable. So great was the violence of the storm, that living men and cattle are said to have been lifted up from the earth, and dashed upon the ground, and most of them left lifeless! Dead bodies were lying here and there, and the dogs and vultures seen feeding upon them."

The Bengal Hurkaru, April 20 [1838]

The magistrate of the Zillah, 24 Pergunnahs has despatched Serjeant Floyd, with a party of convicts, to proceed to the villages devastated by the late storms, and to bury the corpses of the persons who were killed by the hurricane.

The bodies, we learn from persons who went to see these places, lie strewn about in all directions—some with their arms carried away, some being minus a leg etc., Cows and bullocks had been driven so strongly by the force of the storm, as to have their horns driven into the earth, and many lie dead in that posture.

Brick-built buildings have been thrown down, and the bricks themselves hurled to a great distance by the tempest, and large coco-nut trees, etc., rooted from their original situation, and buried four or five feet deep, in other places, thirty or forty yards distance.

At one place, called Baddah, no less than 250 dead bodies were counted by the spectators; females with their jewels on, lie dead and untouched, the putrid smell being too offensive, and considered infectious by the surviving villagers, so as to deter them from approaching these corpses, many of which were in a state of nudity, with the jackals and vultures feeding on them. The convicts dug large holes in the earth, hurl the dead bodies promiscuously into them, and then cover them up.

Native superstition ascribes the scourge to the curses of a fakeer, who asked for some charity of these villagers, and was refused by all except one old woman, whose house has consequently escaped the effects of this tempest!"

Chapter Five

Missionaries

The state of native feeling in British India is a subject which ought to excite the deepest interest in those who have at heart the moral interests of India, as well as the political interests of Britain. Our sentiments on this subject have often been expressed, and every months intelligence strengthens our confidence in their truth.

There appears to be an incipient hostility growing up between the un-anglicised native on one hand and the English Instructionists on the other, which, if it continues, will effectually counteract the amelioration of the people of India, if it work no other mischief.

The Instructionists are of two classes, both of whom are viewed with equal jealousy and dislike by the natives, namely, the missionaries and the English Educationists. Whilst the former, with the Bishop of Calcutta at their head are denouncing the Hindu system in terms most offensive, which must irritate thousands and can conciliate none, the latter are attacking the literature of the Hindus, and striving to abolish all traces of their learning as completely as our manufacturers, with the aid of the legislature, have extinguished their exquisite manufactures. When every national feature is obliterated amongst the people of India, then their millenium is to commence. The natives, meanwhile, are not slow to perceive the result, and to prepare for resistance. We subjoin a translation of an extract from the

Prubhakar

We would strongly advise that all these smooth-tongued, but world-destroying missionaries should have a mark put on their white faces, and that they should be driven out of this city; for, until of late years, the inhabitants used, without meeting any opposition, to acquire religious merit by observing the precepts and ceremonies of the *Vedas*.

Moreover the Hindus never find fault with, or assail the religion of others; but these white faced, crafty missionaries, whose sole aim is to destroy the religion of the people, have erected in different places tiles-houses (chapels), where they stand with awe-inspiring looks, and, agreeably to the command of their own foreign *Shastri,* the Bible, proclaim the acts and praises of the Son of Lady Mary, lifting up both hands, and moving their bodies as if they were dancing, and by every wily contrivance destroying the religion and cast of the Hindus.

We repeat, therefore, our opinion, that the measure alluded to above (viz. putting a mark on their faces, and expelling them from the city), should by all means be resorted to. But what matter of astonishment is it, that the rulers of the land are honouring the very men who seek the hurt of others, whilst those of their subjects (viz. the Hindus), who are spending a great portion of their lives in religious exercises and holy acts, are neglected by them! Be this as it may, a great deal of injustice is now being committed.

Review of *Eastern News,*
Asiatic Journal, September–December 1838

The Mohurrum [a Muslim festival]

"On the 6th April [1838], on the occasion of carrying the *tajiah* [portable shrine], during the Mohurrum, an affray took palce between the Mahomedans and the Hindoos in the Durrumtollah. Sticks, and even swords, were used by the respective partisans, and there was lamentable deficiency of police force.

At a village called Noolo, near Aandool, while the infatuated Musulmans were passing in procession through a rice-field, observing a Hindoo at work in it, they asked him, in a vehement manner, how he dare to work on a day of festivity in honour of their God.

The Hindoo replied, in a terrified and humble tone, that being a man of a different religion, it was not obligatory on his part to observe their festivals.

At this, the Musulmans fell upon the poor fellow, and began to thrash him severely. Two chookeedars, who came to his assistance, shared the same fate with him. The assault was so brutal, that the labourer and one of the chookeedars are said to have expired on the spot."

Suttee in India

A proof of increasing disgust to the practice of the self-immolation of widows on the part of the natives, appears from the fact, that of ten suttees prevented

in the Southern Concan, in the year 1819, four were dissuaded from their purpose by inhabitants of villages, or relations of the intended victims.

In another case, a widow of a Brahmin in the thanah of Poree, Calcutta division, in August 1823, prepared for the ceremony, and threw herself into the burning pit where the body of her husband was consuming, but almost immediately leaped out and made her escape. She recovered from the burns, and her family did not abjure her, but received her as usual.

Some of the cases of cremation were attended with singular circumstances. In the Zillah of Moorshedabad, a women of the Kaet cast, aged 26, performed the rite of anoomarana, her husband having died at Rajmahal. Endeavours were made to dissuade her, but she was determined. On the pile, her composure lasted as long as the flames were confined to her lower extremities; when they reached her breast and face her fortitude gave way, and, by a violent exertion, she disengaged herself from the faggots, and sprung from the pile at the feet of the magistrate, who renewed his efforts to deter her from suicide.

She, however, insisted on returning to the pile, complained loudly of his interposition, broke from his hold, endeavoured to climb up the burning logs, invoking the aid of her relations, who lifted her into the flames, which speedily consumed her to ashes.

The victim of superstition was firmly impressed with belief that this was the third time of her soul's incarnation. She assured the magistrate that the sacrifice was not terrible or new to her, as she had performed the rite at Benares and Canoga, adding, that she knew what her sufferings would be, and how they would be recompensed.

A case in the Zillah of Balas ore (April, 1823) shewed the unalterable resolution, as well as the motives of the victim.

The suttee was a brahminee, aged 27; she replied to the darogah, who attempted to dissuade her from burning, in the following words:

"I burn with the hope of obtaining pardon of my sins along with the body of my husband, who, to my fancy, is still alive; as, by the death of my husband, I consider myself as dead, and consequently I feel no regret in committing myself to the flames; after due observance of the rules prescribed by the shastres, I shall obtain forgiveness of suicide, and free myself of any like (?) attached thereto."

Amongst the Bombay papers, mention is made of a ceremony called palashvudee, which consists in consecrating an image of rice, supposed to be identified with the deceased husband, along with which the widow burns.

This species of sacrifice is not clogged with the requisites essential to the sahamaran or the encomia, and sanctions an almost unlimited performance of suttee.

If the paramount law of India be Mohammedans, as affirmed by the author of "Observations on the Law and Constitution of India, " it seems to be no invasion of the rights of the Hindoos to apply the Mussulman code to these cases. The magistrate of Ghazeepoore (Mr. Melville) seems of this opinion: he observes, in a letter (8th July 1823) to the judges of the Court of Circuit of Benares, "I do not think any new rules or regulations upon the subject are requisite. Under the Mahommedan law, I conceive, any person aiding and abetting another in committing suicide would be punishable; all I wish for is, permission to carry into execution laws which have been hitherto dormant."

The Mirror, No. CLXXII, Saturday, December 10, 1825
[extract taken from the *Asiatic Journal*]

The Indian Rope Trick, from the Diary of an Assistant Surgeon

During my sojourn at Chittoor, I had the opportunity of witnessing the following very singular exhibition: it is one of which I had, before seeing it, heard mention made, and designated *sitting in the air.* A party, consisting of the following individuals, assembled by invitation in the house of A.D. Campbell, Esq.; Messrs. Harris, Campbell, Grant, Jennings, White, Hobson and myself, with Mesdames Campbell and Jennings.

The exhibitor was a man of about forty-five years of age, of middle stature and slight construction, weighing about nine stone, and, as far as appearance goes, was as decidedly a sitter in the air as can well be imagined by anything incarnate.

We were all allowed to examine the apparatus used in completing the preliminaries of the exhibition as minutely as we chose. This apparatus consisted of four articles: first, a four legged stool, very much after the fashion of those on which shoemakers sit at their work, being not quite so wide, and having a cup like hollow at one end, about the size of a coffee cup; second, a bamboo tube, lined with tin, and having a bore in diameter about an inch; third, a small piece of horn, exactly after the pattern of the head of a walking-stick, such as was in use a century ago; forth, a deer skin tube stuffed, about as large as a man's thumb, and about seven inches in length.

Having committed these four things to our close inspection, the exhibitor requested that some of the servants who were in the room might be allowed

to hold up a large blanket, at their arms' utmost height, all round him and his apparatus. Thus encircled and unseen, within the blanket, he remained about seven minutes, in which time not a sound was heard proceeding from him, nothing was handed to him; he had no communication with any thing or any body outside.

At the end of this short interval, he tapped against the inside of the blanket, which he had specified to be a signal for removing the screen; each servant accordingly let go his hold; the blanket dropped to the floor, and was immediately removed, and there sat the exhibitor in the air! He had stipulated that, during the time of his exhibiting, he should not be actually touched; we were to go as near as we chose, and inspect as closely as we pleased.

On immediately surrounding him to see what use he had made of the apparatus we found it was thus disposed of:

One end of the bamboo tube placed in the hollow cup at the extremity of the stool, the tube standing erect, the horn handle was screwed on to the top, the little deer skin pad was placed on the handle, and on this pad rested the under side of the right wrist, the right arm being about two-thirds in extension from the shoulder. The general appearance was as if he had been a tailor sitting cross-legged at his work, the shop board suddenly removed from under him, and he left suspended in the air. His left arm lay in his lap, and upon the fingers of his right hand he had a circlet of black beads, which he gently fingered, without disturbing his wrist.

We most minutely examined all around, above, and below him; there were no bars, no springs, no wires, no strings, no shadow of machinery. He was dressed in a figured cotton wrapper, which adhered close to his body; the sleeves of this garment were large, but folded back so much as to leave the right arm nearly uncovered, and thus to satisfy all present that there was no sort of communication between the body of the exhibitor and the little apparatus, except that of mere contact between the underside of the right wrist and the deer skin which rested on the horn handle. So perfectly motionless was he, that his body seemed lifeless; there was not the slightest manifestation of respiration, but large drops of perspiration poured down his face.

He remained in this position for *twelve minutes*, when Mr. Campbell, considering the exhibition as fully satisfactory, and agreeable to the promise made to the man prior to exhibiting, directed the servants again to surround him with the blanket, and in four minutes he re-appeared as if nothing had happened.

For my own part I never witnessed so inexplicable an exhibition; it has been seen by a great many persons at Madras, many of whom have theorized

upon it much more learnedly than correctly. I understand that he was offered some time since an engagement of a thousand pounds to go to England, but refused it.

The Assistant Surgeon added:- This singular person died of an attack of cholera at Cuddapah, and with him perished the secret of his power.

Asiatic Journal, May–August 1842

The Viceroys and the Opium Trade

It could be claimed that the Honourable East India Company were the first organised drug dealers.

The poppy (Papaver somniferum) had been grown and used as a medicinal drug since pre-historic times. Homer, in the 9th century B.C., appears to describe it in the Iliad when he refers to a decoction which induced forgetfulness of pain and sense of evil.

Dioscorides, in the 1st century A.D. was to describe the properties of opium and the method by which it was obtained. In the 16th century opium began to be used for pleasure, a recreational drug as we might call it now, it was usually eaten or drunk, only later were the Chinese to devise a method for smoking it, when tobacco was introduced into the country in the 17th century.

The ingestion of opium by the poor in India had long been prevalent since one of its properties was to relieve hunger by restricting the secretion of the gastric juices. It helped, but did not cure, the pains of dysentery, diarrhoea and cholera by reducing the movements of the stomach and bowel. It would of course blunt the reality of the wretched condition in which so many existed.

The British arrived in India as merchants, and were very soon at war with their neighbours, annexing those who would not pay tribute and acknowledge the supremacy of the Company. When the British conquered Bengal in 1750 they found that they had acquired the largest poppy growing area in India. It was very soon realised how valuable this commodity was, and within a few years it was made a monopoly of the Company, who appointed agents to pay the peasants to plant and harvest the poppy.

The opium was then collected into the Company's factories where it was prepared; the opium was of a black or brown rubbery texture scrapped from the seed pod of the poppy, which had previously been scored with a special implements to make it exude the juice which was then dried in the sun. At the factory the opium was rolled into balls of about 3 lbs, wrapped in poppy

petals and packed into wooden boxes or chests, forty balls to a chest, these were sent down to Calcutta for auction to British traders.

Some was sent to England for use in the proprietary medicines industry, the remainder was exported to most of the South East Asian ports, but the majority ended up in China, usually by English traders selling to corrupt officials who would take it into the smaller Chinese ports.

Hobson Jobson quotes Raynal in 1770 as saying that "The Chinese emperors have suppressed it in their dominions, by condemning to the flames every vessel that imports this species of poison".

Traders would buy the opium from the Company at Calcutta and agree to pay for it within a certain period; having made their sale for silver they would pay their debt to the Company at Canton. The profit would allow them to purchase goods at the Company's warehouse, since the Chinese would only allow trade to be conducted through the 'Cohong', a body of some ten or twelve licensed merchants. Europeans could not enter China except through the port of Canton, and even there they were restricted to their factories and forbidden to enter the city.

The Company used the silver to purchase tea and silk, without the money from the traders Britain would be drained of silver, since this was the only currency the Chinese would accept.

The Opium War of 1839–42 was fought to open more Chinese ports to trade, principally opium, which as it became more available became more desired. With such a ready market the Company was able to levy even heavier taxes on it and still enable the traders to make a handsome profit. By 1880 one hundred thousand chests were being exported annually. The tax on opium very soon became the second largest source of income for the Company, after the revenue from land tax.

The British were in a cleft stick, they knew the effects of the drug on the people who became addicted to it and yet they were unable to manage without the income it produced, since any short fall between the revenue and the cost of maintaining the Indian Empire would have to be made up by the British tax payer.

The Directors of the East India Company wrote in the early eighteen hundreds, "If it were possible to prevent the use of the drug altogether except strictly for the purpose of medicine we would gladly do it in compassion to mankind".

Fine words indeed

In 1843, the matter was raised in Parliament by Lord Ashley, who said that "It was utterly inconsistent with the honour and duty of a Christian kingdom to continue with the opium trade."

Needless to say he was ignored

The British, after the First Anglo-Burmese war of 1824–6 had lost no time in introducing the natives in their newly acquired provinces to the delights of opium, a further market was found in 1853 when Lower Burma was annexed to British India, and now it seemed that Upper Burma was to be similarly favoured. There were, however, a few voices raised in dissent.

The Times of India, **23rd March 1886,**
The Opium Traffic in Burma

A deputation waited on Lord Kimberley at the India Office on the 4th instant, on the subject of the opium traffic in Upper Burma. Sir Joseph Pease M.P., Mr A. M'Arthur M.P., Mr Isaac Hoyle M.P., Captain Verney M.P., Lord Lymington M.P., Sir R. Flower M.P., Mr W.G. Hastings M.P., General Davies, Sir W.T. Charley, Mr W.F. Chesson and Mr D. M'Laren, were among those present. Sir U.K. Shuttleworth M.P., Under Secretary for India, was suffering from a cold and was unable to accompany Lord Kimberley.

Sir Joseph Pease M.P., said the deputation wished to lay their views before his Lordship concerning the responsibilities of this country in Upper and Lower Burma in regard to the opium traffic. It was a well ascertained fact that fifty years ago the consumption of opium in Lower Burma was very small indeed, when that country was annexed to the Indian Empire, the drug was introduced for the purposes of revenue, and the effects upon the people, physically and mentally, had been most mischievous and deplorable. He admitted that of late years efforts had been made to place the sale under stricter regulations, but a large revenue was still secured to the Government by the present system.

The case of Upper Burma was no doubt surrounded with greater difficulty, because they were close upon a long line of frontier with China, and if we were going to ask that Indian opium should pass into China through Burma he did not see how in fairness we were going to prohibit the passing of Chinese opium into Burma. He believed the only solution was to prohibit and make contraband all trade between Upper and Lower Burma and China as regarded this drug.

Sir R. Fowler M.P., admitted that unless the people of England were prepared to do something to assist the Indian revenue he did not think that we would be justified in putting a stop altogether to the traffic in India; but he urged that we should cease to have any direct connection with the manufacture of the article.

In reply, Lord Kimberley said that he could not forebear to note that a large amount of opium was produced in China itself, and that in Yunnan, for instance, two thirds of the cultivated portion of that enormous province was devoted to the production of the poppy. He need not point out the strong bearing of this fact upon the constantly repeated assertion that we were the instruments by which opium was forced on China. It seemed to him that this was a proper moment for calling the attention of the Government to this important question as regarded Burma. He had no doubt that the deputation were aware of the report of Sir Charles Aitchison, and of the steps that were taken to check the consumption of opium, which clearly was producing a prejudicial effect.

He found that in 1881 the number of opium shops in British Burma was reduced from 67 to 28, while the selling price of opium was raised from 24 to 28 rupees per seer [two and a half pounds] in Arakan and to 32 rupees in Pegu and Tenasserim. The consumption fell immediately about 22 per cent, while the revenue increased to a little more than a notional extent.

Since 1881–2, in the first half of which year the changes were introduced, the number of shops had further declined to 18, but the sale remained stationary, while the revenue increased by 7 per cent. The measures that had been taken, therefore, had not been ineffectual in checking the consumption, especially when the increased population was considered. Mr Bernard, our Commissioner, stated in his last report that he did not think any further radical changes in the use of opium could usefully be introduced at the present moment.

He (Lord Kimberley) could promise the deputation that he would lose no time in bringing their memorial under the consideration of the Viceroy. It was obvious from what he had already stated that the attention of the Indian Government had been officially directed to the effects of the extension of the use of opium in Burma, and he felt certain that there would be as careful examination of the facts as regarded Upper Burma, and probably a reconsideration of the subject.

The annexation of Upper Burma to Lower Burma marked a considerable change in the whole situation, and it was possible that that might bring about some change in the arrangements of the Government. At the same

time, he must not be understood as giving an opinion in favour of change. It was clear that these matters must be dealt with by those who had local knowledge, and by the Viceroy and his officers, and he was sure the subject would have careful consideration.

The deputation thanked his Lordship and withdrew

Lord Kimberley was being somewhat disingenuous when he said that China was producing its own opium and therefore we were not responsible for its consumption in that country; the Chinese had been forced to grow their own opium to feed the addicts that Britain had created and to prevent the constant drain of the countries silver to pay for it. He could of course afford to take a relaxed view of the matter since although it could be pointed out that the number of outlets for the drug had been reduced the revenue had actually increased.

***The Times of India,* 12th May 1886'**
How we poison the Burmese.

The recent annexation of Upper Burma has again brought us face to face with the Opium Question. We have once more to decide whether we will prefer morality to revenue, or deliberately legalize in the new province a vice to which under our influence, the Burmese have become particularly liable, and for the introduction of which into their country we are directly responsible.

The first British annexation in Burma took place in 1826, the second in 1853, and the third only a few months ago. It will thus be seen that we gained our first footing in the territories of the Lord of the Golden Palace about sixty years ago. Before we established our authority there the sale of opium was prohibited by the laws of the Burmese Empire; and the vice of opium smoking or eating was absolutely unknown among the Burmese themselves.

This statement does not rest upon the testimony of missionaries or philanthropists; it is derived from the reports of our own officers, who declare the use of opium was not a Burman habit, but was the result of the most studied, and as some would say, of the most Satanic efforts on the part of our officials to deprave the tastes of the people. It is well that Englishmen, who are so often jubilant over the civilizing mission of their country, should sometimes look at the obverse side of the shield.

It is a fact that when the Indian Government organized their administration in the provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim, one of their earliest acts was to licence shops for the sale of opium. Previously, any person who

violated the propitiatory laws that were in force was liable to the punishment of death; but the Indian Government, from a necessary regard for the interests of their revenue, issued licences to certain Bengali and Chinese traders, and sold manufactured opium directly to them through the agency of local officials. There was not even the excuse that a popular demand existed for the drug, So little taste was there for it among the people, that the opium dealers endeavoured to create the necessary appetite by selling at nominal prices, or even giving away small packets of betel leaf steeped in a decoction of the poppy. It is in evidence that the licensees employed agents to distribute large supplies of this insidious preparation especially among the young, who were not likely at first to take the drug in its pure form.

What has been the effect of these nefarious measures upon the moral and physical condition of the Burmese?

Mr Hind, Assistant Commissioner in Arakan, whose official connection with that division dates from the year 1835, states that he,

"saw a fine healthy generation of strong men succeeded by a rising generation of haggard opium smokers and eaters, who indulged to such an extent that their mental and physical powers were alike wasted".

It could hardly be otherwise, when the debauchery of youth was encouraged for revenue purposes by means which, it may be said, without fear of contradiction, were never before employed in the East, where conscience exercises so little influence in public affairs.

Mr Hind speaks for Arakan, but Colonel D. Brown hears similar testimony as to Tenasserim, where he was Commissioner in 1870.

"In this province", he says, "the words of an 'opium smoker' or 'eater' and a 'vagabond' are and have been for many years synonymous. The old and respectable portion of our population complain much of our opium shops, and of the evils they bring on them. The sleepy dreamy state of the opium smoker has a particular attraction for our people [the Burmese]; they take to it, and after having acquired the habit, they cannot give it up; their friends refuse to support them; they steal, rob or murder to get their food and their opium; they often take to dacoity, and join a frontier band; or, if they remain in the province, they end their days in jail, or a halter often puts an end to their existence".

Surely a sadder picture was never drawn by official pen, or one more calculated to excite the suspicion that in the workings of our national policy the evil too often more than counterbalances the good.

The people of British Burma [Lower Burma until 1886] long made efforts in vain to induce the Indian Government to abate the evils which had been forced on them. So far back as 1863 the inhabitants of Arakan did so in a petition to the Chief Commissioner, in which they complained that their children and young men were being made drunkards by spirits and opium.

The feeling at Akyab was so strong in 1878 that the elders of that important town petitioned the Chief Commissioner on the subject. They told him that the consumption of opium was contrary to the religion of the people; that it was sapping their vitality, and unfitting them for the duties of active life; that it induced habits of stealing and immorality; and finally, that owing to the enervating character of the vice, much land was being thrown out of cultivation.

An official investigation was instituted in the same year; with the result that both civil officers and natives entirely agreed in opinion as to the widespread misery and demoralization which the practise of opium smoking had caused.

Chief Commissioner Aitchison, as became an enlightened administrator, carefully examined the official reports that had been made on his instructions, and gave a summary of their contents, which ought to be read by everyone who may be tempted to regard the evils ascribed to the use of opium as the inventions of benevolent fanatics. The reports show, he said, that among the Burmans "habitual use of the drug saps the physical and mental energies, destroys the nerves, and emaciates the body, predisposes to disease, induces indolent and filthy habits of life, fills the jails with men of relaxed frame, predisposed to dysentery and cholera, prevents the due extension of cultivation and the development of the land revenue, checks the natural growth of the population and enfeebles the constitution of succeeding generations".

After such a terrible indictment of the system by the Chief Commissioner himself, it, of course, became necessary that remedial measures be adopted; and it is only fair to Sir Charles Aitchison to say that he showed a readiness to go a long way towards reverting to the old Burmese policy. Forty out of the sixty-eight licensed shops were at once closed, and ten more shared the same fate in 1882, leaving only eighteen open.

Lord Kimberley naturally takes credit to the Government for having shut up so many opium shops; but the results, although all that could be desired in districts where prohibition has been practically enforced, have proved unsatisfactory in other parts of the country where the sale is still legalized.

Lord Kimberley informed a recent deputation from the Anti-opium Society that in 1880–1 the total number of seers of opium sold was 54,265, and that

in 1884–5 the amount had been reduced to 41,992. That this is gratifying, so far as it shows that the sale, instead of having increased, as it would have done under the old system, has diminished by more than twenty per cent; but it must be remembered that the people are anxious to get rid of the evil altogether, and in some places have actually suggested that the land tax should be increased in order to make good the loss of revenue.

Lord Kimberley has referred to the Viceroy the question as to what arrangements shall be made for Upper Burma, where the opium traffic was prohibited under King Thibaw and his predecessors. Owing to the contiguity of that province to Western China, it may be difficult to prevent the possibility of smuggling, but it is manifestly desirable that public opinion should move the Government to enforce measures of prohibition. Opium as a medicine has been a great blessing to mankind, but as a stimulant it has proved an unmixed curse, and no considerations of revenue should tempt us to sanction its sale and use in Burma.

Specially contributed to the *Working Men's Club and Institute Journal*, by F.W. Chesson.

The Times of India, 15th September 1886

The Burma Excise Report recently published shows that the closing of the opium shops in Akyab stimulated the sale of morphia pills. A Mohammedan told Commissioner he had sometimes as many as 500 customers a day. The pills were sold at one anna each, and were composed of morphia, musk, saffron and aromatic powder. Two of them are ordinarily consumed daily. It was claimed that patients can gradually decrease the quantity taken and become entirely free from the evil habit of taking opium in any form.

The Excise Commissioner, however, thinks it improbable that a man could leave off the use of morphia, which is as insidious as opium in its properties. If the beneficial effect claimed for the pills is produced, he considers it would be inadvisable to interfere with their sale; but otherwise, the sale of what is really a preparation of opium by unlicensed vendors and persons who are not recognised as medical practitioners could be prevented.

In Rangoon, statistics taken on ten days of different years show that over 3,000 persons per diem purchase opium; under nineteen per cent of them being Burmese; about twenty per cent Chinese and over sixty per cent natives of India. There are no statistics available to show the nationality of the purchasers in the districts, where it may be presumed that the Burmese purchasers are in much larger proportions.

The Governor General of India, the Marquess of Dalhousie, wrote to his friend Sir George Couper, in 1853, just after the annexation of Lower Burma, "the last opium sale was a little down. However, it gave 30 lakhs; and £10,000 a day is not a bad income".

Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India at the time of the annexation of the remainder of the country of Burma, was not in a position, even had he wished to, to prevent the sale of opium, he had after all to pay for the recent war and the cost of the pacification of the country.

The British steadfastly refused all attempts to suppress the trade, but despite pleas from the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, and from international religious bodies, it was not until 1905 that the newly elected Liberal Government agreed to phase out the trade.

According to the *Encyclopaedia of Asian History;* colonial governments in South East Asia continued to gain revenue from their opium monopolies until the Japanese finally banned its use in 1942, in the countries they occupied during the Second World War.

Compiled by Terence R Blackburn

Chapter Six

The Invasion of the Carnatic and the treatment of prisoners by Hyder Ali

In the year 1777, being at that time a second lieutenant in the royal artillery, I received an order to recruit for a new regiment, which Lord Macleod was commanded to raise for the service of His Majesty. With this regiment I served in various parts of England until the year 1799, when the East India Company, fearful for their possessions, unless aided by Government, solicited reinforcements to secure their territories against aggressions of the native princes. This demand was granted, and Lord Macleod's regiment, to which I had the honour, and as the event proved the misfortune, to belong, was embarked on this service.

After a long and tedious voyage, retarded by the reduction of some of the French settlements on the coast of Africa, the regiment arrived at Madras in December 1799, landing nearly one thousand men, whose appearance, as they were clothed in Highland uniform, struck the inhabitants with astonishment.

At this time, Pondicherry had been reduced, and the Coromandel coast was in perfect peace and amity with its surrounding neighbours. The addition of our regiment to the forces at Madras animated the spirits of all the British residents, and was particularly gratifying to the Governor, who fully appreciated this great accession of military strength.

At this juncture, the prospects of the Company to be extremely bright; lustre had been shed on their arms by the capture of Pondicherry, after a most gallant defence, and it was universally allowed that Hyder Ali [Hyder Ali Khan Bahadur, c.1722–1782], by remaining tranquil during the progress of the siege, had given the strongest proof of his amity towards England. Those best competent to form an opinion, admitted that a moderate army from the Mysore Prince, in alliance with the French, would have compelled the British to retreat.

There were other circumstances which augured favourably for the maintenance of peace. Although Hyder Ali was suspected to be an enemy of Great Britain, he had, nevertheless, two years before this period, manifested an apparently warm desire to continue on terms of friendship. An embassy had been sent to his court, and although it displayed little of the pomp and splendour on such occasions in the East (which Hyder, indeed, knew how to despise), it denoted sincerity on the part of England, and the manner in which it was received evinced both respect and condescension.

Mr Swartz, a German and a missionary, living in India under the protection of the Company, was selected as ambassador; accompanied by only two or three personal attendants, he passed through the dominions of Hyder, and was admitted to the presence of that prince at Seringapatam.

When Swartz approached the throne, Hyder rose and advanced to receive him, declaring that he was now sensible the Company wished his friendship, by sending such a man to communicate with him. The embassy had for its objects general professions of esteem in a spirit of reciprocity.

The prince parted with the priest highly satisfied with the assurances that he had received of the Company's amicable feelings, acquiesced in the measures offered to his consideration, and as a token of his esteem, pressed Mr Swartz to accept a valuable diamond and a sum of money.

These presents were refused, with dignity tempered with respect, Mr Swartz observing that he could not receive them in his ambassadorial character, but duly appreciating the kindness and generosity of the donor, he would appropriate the money for the erection of a church he was about to build at Tanjore, if his highness would permit him to put it down as a benefaction of the Mysore prince in the promotion of that undertaking.

Hyder answered with a smile, "Be it, my friend, as you please;" and his name now stands where it ought to, at the head of the list of benefactors of the Christian church at that place.

On the arrival of Lord Macleod's regiment, the moderate tone and commercial temper of the Madras Government underwent a considerable change, and a general review of the troops; including the Highlanders, took place. Hyder's ambassador was invited to it, and appeared much struck with the military display. The Governor was heard to ask him whether, in the event of a war, he thought his master could withstand such a force; the ambassador answered that it would be impossible, and that such a blow could only be warded off by pagodas [gold coins].

The representative of the Mysore chief was known to possess an intelligent mind, and he had a quick perception of the motive which had induced the Governor to invite him to the parade; nor did the allusion of Sir Thomas Rumbold, to the formidable efficiency of the British troops, pass by unheeded.

Since the embassy of Mr Swartz, already noticed, mercantile relations had been established between Hyder and the English; the inhabitants of Madras were accordingly surprised to hear that the Governor had resolved on sending Mr Gray on a fresh mission to the court of Mysore. Its object was kept a profound secret, but it transpired long before the return of the unsuccessful ambassador.

Hyder had been requested to forward an order permitting Mr Gray to approach the capital, but the guards who accompanied him were not allowed to pass the frontiers, and the envoy himself, attended only by his personal servants, proceeded to Seringaptam, where Hyder received him in full durbar. He produced his credentials, and then delivered to the Mysore prince a letter addressed to him by the Governor of Madras, which stated that, in addition to the Company's immense military resources, a fresh army had arrived from England; that the object of the Company was to maintain peace in India with all the native powers, and that the war like preparations had subjected to very heavy disbursements, which would be still further increased by keeping in constant readiness a disposable force sufficient to quell all disturbances and prevent hostilities. The letter concluded by demanding from Hyder ten lakhs of pagodas, or four hundred thousand pounds, to assist the Company in carrying out its peaceful policy, the payment of which would entitle him to their uniform support and alliance.

Hyder's reply was laconic.

"The request of the East India Company", he said, "is doubtless fair and reasonable; the money shall be forthcoming; but as I am a strict observer of my word, I propose to bring the tribute in person. In the meantime, Sir, you and your monkey (Mr Gray had one of those animals with him) may return to Madras".

Within a few weeks after the return of Mr Gray to the presidency, it was rumoured that Hyder Ali was collecting a large force in the neighbourhood of Seringapatam, and many intelligent natives declared that his intention was to invade the Carnatic.

The Nabob of Arcot, at a very early period, acquainted the Madras Government that they would shortly be attacked, and call upon them to prepare their army for the defence of his dominions as well as their own possessions. So confident was the Nabob of the accuracy of his information,

that he ordered all his cavalry who were cantoned in the southern parts of his country to hold themselves in readiness to march to Madras.

The Company's army, European and native, were so dispersed throughout a coast fifteen hundred miles in extent, that three thousand men could not have been collected to act as one body in less than a month. Mr Gray's hasty return from Mysore created no apprehensions at the presidency, and Sir Thomas Rumbold, on quitting India at this moment, congratulated his successor on having the Government handed over to him in so flourishing a condition, with prosperity at home and respect abroad, and strong in the alliance of the native princes. There were some, however, who thought it strange that Sir Thomas did not wait for Hyder's lakhs of pagodas.

Rumours of Hyder's approach increased daily, but the Madras Government remained incredulous.

The Sack of Porto Novo

On 7 July, such proofs of the invasion of the Carnatic were unfortunately furnished, as to remove all doubts. Information had been conveyed to the Mysore chief that the open sea-port town of Porto Novo was overflowing with riches and costly merchandise of every description, and although it was three hundred miles from his capital, and in the centre of the Carnatic, with a strong garrison within a short distance of its walls, he formed the daring resolution of commencing the war by its plunder, for which purpose he selected three thousand of his best cavalry, together with a equal number of infantry, who were to march and ride.

In four days, this force had penetrated the passes that divide Mysore from the Carnatic, and before any intelligence of its approach had been received, it arrived at Porto Novo.

The immediate consequence of this sudden irruption was, that the few troops who were in the town were cut to pieces, with the greater part of the inhabitants, and the town itself, one of the richest in the East, in the space of a few days, was completely pillaged. It was supposed that Hyder, independently of the private plunder collected by his soldiers, obtained a greater booty in this place than he afterwards acquired in the plunder of Arcot, the capital. This hardy and successful enterprise was said to have been executed by his son, Tippoo Sahib [later Sultan Fateh Ali Tipu, reigned 1782–1799].

Intelligence of the invasion of the Carnatic and capture of Porto Novo was received by the Madras Government at the same time, with the additional

information that Hyder in person, with an army of two hundred thousand men, of whom fifty thousand were cavalry, supported by one hundred pieces of cannon, was then in the heart of the Carnatic. In this dreadful position of affairs, without any army capable of facing the enemy, and the garrisons badly supplied with provisions and warlike stores, it was feared that nothing could resist the torrent; had Hyder marched direct to Madras it is highly probable that the British power would not have been in existence in India the ensuing year. But having no reason to think that the British Government had been so improvident, he satisfied himself with laying siege to Arcot, and plundering the adjacent country with his horse, and, in the short space of one month, he sent off one million of cattle, and five hundred thousand of the inhabitants, to enrich by cultivation the barren districts of the Mysore empire.

The British Retaliate

In three weeks, a force of three thousand men was collected in the neighbourhood of Madras, under the command of Lord Macleod, and infinite pains were taken over this small body to cover the country and collect a sufficient number of cattle for the field train, to be in readiness when a sufficient army could be mustered. The enterprise of Hyder had been so well conducted that it was generally imagined the British detachments would be destroyed in detail in attempting to effect their junction; but the alluring prospect of speedily reducing Arcot, by which he hoped to raise the fame of his arms, detained him before that capital.

An army, not exceeding eight thousand men, with forty pieces of cannon, was at length collected at Madras, and hope and confidence began to reappear. Colonel Baillie was on his march from the Northern Circars with three thousand five hundred men, while Colonel Corby was approaching from the south with two thousand good horse, and an equal number of infantry. The expected accession of strength induced the authorities to hold the enemy in contempt, and from a state of absolute despondency they became almost insolent with the prospect of anticipated triumph. They were soon to be taught a lesson in bitter humiliation.

The plunder of the Carnatic became every hour an object of increasing solicitude, more particularly to the Nabob of Arcot, who trembled for the safety of his capital. Sir Hector Munro commanded the British army, and was called upon to march to Arcot with his eight thousand men, this was opposed by Lord Macleod, on the plea that such a force was inadequate, and urged the necessity of awaiting the junction of the two divisions under Baillie and Corby. Though the prudence of this advice was admitted, it was contended

that the movement of Munro's army would alarm Hyder, and tend to derange or perplex his plans; and it was resolved that Baillie who was now only twenty miles from Madras, should march in parallel line and join Sir Hector higher up the country. The danger of this measure, in the face of an active enemy was not sufficiently considered.

However, Sir Hector Munro left Madras and directed his march towards Arcot, which is but eighty miles distant from the presidency; numerous bodies of the enemies cavalry hovering on the flanks and rear of the army, rendered the most vigilant circumspection indispensable, as the loss of baggage or provisions in a country now so completely in the power of Hyder would have proved fatal.

Heavy rain set in at this period, and Baillie was compelled to continue and prolong his parallel line with Sir Hector, both being prevented by the unusual overflowing of a small river from effecting their junction. This untoward circumstance created considerable anxiety, which was painfully increased on our beholding, at Conjeveram, about fifty miles from Madras, the whole of Hyder's army, commanded by himself in person, drawn up and offering battle.

It appeared that the Mysore chief had gained exact information of the positions of the two armies, and of the impediments which had prevented Baillie from crossing the river; moreover, finding the capture of Arcot a more difficult undertaking than he had calculated upon, he had raised the siege, intending, however, to resume it, should he prove successful in his projected attack on either or both of the British divisions. With these views, he ordered his son, Tippoo Sahib, with twenty thousand men, to fall on Colonel Baillie the instant he crossed the river.

Hyder's army remained in camp within a mile of Sir Hector Munro, and his flanks were secured by strong entrenchments. A battle seemed inevitable on the first movement of either party, and considering the vast disparity of numbers, the result was a matter of deep anxiety to the British.

Problems for the British

On the 6th of September, a long, heavy, and uninterrupted cannonade during six hours was heard, and it was at once concluded that Baillie had been attacked; this consideration became the more alarming, as no diminution of Hyder's camp or force had been observed.

Towards evening the firing ceased, but we of course remained ignorant how the affair had terminated.

On the evening of the 7th, a spy from Baillie contrived to elude the enemy, and arrived in our camp with a short note. Its contents were the following: "Dear General, On the 5th I crossed the river, and the 6th commenced my march to join you. On the morning, I was attacked by a formidable army, consisting of horse, infantry, and guns, commanded by Tippoo Sahib, and after a severe action I entirely defeated him. He is now near me. I cannot come on. I am in want of every thing, and expect you with anxiety. (signed) Baillie."

The receipt of this letter threw General Munro into the greatest perplexity. The whole present and future subsistence of his army seemed to depend upon the preservation of his depot of grain at Conjeveram; to quit his position, was to abandon it to the enemy; to remain was to sacrifice Baillie and ultimately himself, as the safety of them both depended on their junction.

After much deliberation, Sir Hector determined upon retaining his position, and even from his small army to send Baillie a reinforcement of troops and ammunition. Perhaps it was the wisest plan he could have adopted in such a dilemma. Had he marched himself, he must have lost his magazine and probably his whole army; as it turned out, the destruction of Baillie's corps was his preservation.

A body of fifteen hundred select men, composed of the flank companies of the whole army, were secretly collected together, and placed under the command of a gallant and experienced officer, Colonel Fletcher. Of this ill-fated detachment, I commanded the grenadiers of the 71st regiment, and my friend, Captain (afterwards General) Baird, the light infantry. Colonel Fletcher received positive orders not to attempt any enterprise on his march that could be avoided, but to confine his object to a junction with Baillie, who was eighteen miles distant.

These troops marched out by the rear of our camp, unobserved by the enemy, and when they advanced about four or five miles, they suddenly came upon a body of about three hundred horse, who were encamped on the road. The horsemen were fast asleep, and the whole or greater part of them were bayoneted by the division, who did not fire a single shot on the occasion.

We had proceeded about twelve miles on the direct line to Baillie, when our guides pointed out to us Tippoo's camp on our left, with fires in various parts of it. His whole army seemed to be in profound sleep, and had Fletcher chosen to deviate from his orders, there can be no doubt but that he might have destroyed the whole of the enemy; it is also certain that, had Tippoo been prepared to expect us, we should have been exterminated.

At the break of day, we were gratified with a view of Baillie's camp, who turned out immediately to receive us with transports of joy, as he expected another action with Tippoo every hour, and was not only weakened, but in want of ammunition which we supplied. The confidence that this small reinforcement inspired is inconceivable, and a fresh onslaught was looked for with ardour.

The troops having rested a very few hours, at 11 o'clock at night, on the 9th of September, commenced their march, in order to force a junction with Sir Hector Munro, who, it was understood, would keep a vigilant eye over Hyder's movements, and act accordingly.

Tippoo Attacks

We were soon surrounded by numerous bodies of horse, irregular infantry, and rocket-men who never relaxed in their harassing assaults by keeping up a fire on our ranks to impede our progress, but we moved on with much caution, having a convoy of sheep and cattle for the main army.

Colonel Baillie soon perceived that Tippoo had been reinforced in men and guns, as he opened twelve upon the line as it approached the avenue that led to Conjeveram; but the advance moving forward with undismayed coolness, he withdrew his cannon to a strong position on our left, whence he directed a heavy fire on the line as it was passing through the avenue, which the darkness prevented from being effectual.

We had now advanced about nine miles from Baillies camp, having lost about one hundred men in our progress, and a large part of the convoy. Baillie determined to halt during the remainder of the night, for the darkness rendered his position uncertain, nor could he form a just idea of the enemy's force; the cattle could not be kept together, and the troops were fatigued. These considerations induced him to suspend his march until daylight.

When Tippoo found that the British had halted, he again removed his guns, and placed them, covered by his infantry, within two hundred yards of the road which the army would necessarily have to pass. He apprised Hyder [Ali] of his position, and urged his father to hasten to his support.

On the 10th of September, as soon as day broke, Baillie continued his march; the enemy having entirely disappeared, our troops filed off from the avenue into the open plain, and now arrived within seven miles of Sir Hector's encampment, when Tippoo's battery on the left commenced a heavy and well directed fire on the line with grape and roundshot, which in a few minuets did considerable execution. It became impracticable to continue our march

exposed to such a destructive cannonade, and the line was immediately formed.

At this moment, the whole of Tippoo's cavalry sallied from a wood where they had lain in ambush, in our front, and, to the amount of ten thousand, made a furious and formidable charge on the advanced column. The line was at this time formed on an elevated spot, and the enemy were permitted, at full gallop, to approach within ten yards of them. The army being now compelled to show a front to the cavalry, the fire from the battery was continued with fearful precision. It was, however, returned from the advanced of the British line, supported by six pieces of cannon loaded with grape, and the effect on the enemy's column was instantaneous and tremendous. That formidable body at once halted, and the numerous wounded horses, wanting riders, appeared to throw the whole into confusion; many of the principal chiefs fell in attempting to rally and lead on their disorganised cavalry, who being pressed forward by those in the rear, could not retreat, and were therefore compelled to file off by the left, thus receiving the heavy and severe fire of our whole line.

It was afterwards ascertained that Tippoo in person had headed the charge, and that it cost him twelve hundred of his choicest horsemen.

The Mysore cavalry, having got clear of our line, fell in with our rear guard, consisting of a battalion of sepoys and four guns, and had not our men immediately taken up a strong position, they must have been destroyed. Being pressed extremely hard, Captain Powell, who commanded the rear guard, sent to Baillie, requiring immediate reinforcement.

I was detached from the line, with my single company of grenadiers and two sepoys, with whom I joined Powell. While I was receiving orders from that officer, a cannon shot from the enemy's battery killed him on the spot; but we repulsed the assailants. The command of the rear guard now devolved upon me.

Tippoo routed

Baillie, having successfully encountered the grand charge of Tippoo, determined to storm the enemy's guns, which continued to fire with unabated vigour. For this service he selected ten companies of grenadier sepoys, which he placed under the command of Captain Rumley, an officer of distinguished gallantry. It was suggested to the Colonel that he would do well to put a company of European grenadiers at the head of his party; but he replied that he could not spare them from the main body.

This force advanced, with admirable firmness, against the battery, which was attacked in front and flank at the same moment. The Mysoreans soon fell into confusion and fled, abandoning their guns, which were seized by the sepoy grenadiers. The defeat of their horse seemed to have dispirited the enemy.

Tippoo's cavalry recapture their cannon

When Tippoo's cavalry saw that their guns were in our possession, they discontinued their attack on our rear guard and made a desperate attempt to recover their cannon. The troops under Rumley had not yet recovered their perfect order, when this body charged them in the flank, and after a desperate resistance, threw them into confusion. The captured guns were abandoned without being spiked, and the sepoys endeavoured to make good their retreat to the line; they were vigorously pursued by the cavalry, and out of the eight hundred men, six hundred were cut to pieces.

In a short time, the enemy resumed their guns and recommenced their fire, while smart but irregular discharges of musketry from their infantry, who now approached our line from various directions, became extremely galling particularly as it was justly deemed hazardous to detach any more troops from the main body; for the cavalry, flushed with their recent success, appeared fully resolved to make another formidable charge, and we were again exposed to the battery, which was fully as well served as our own artillery. The bulk of the enemy's cavalry, having at this period having collected on our right flank, charged with the most determined bravery, and a large part of our little army was obliged to change its position, and show a front.

Tippoo's gallant horse were again repulsed, though several of their chiefs were actually killed in the act of cutting down our soldiers in their ranks. The action had continued from daylight till ten o'clock, and the loss of the British in the various charges did not amount to less than fifteen hundred men, while that of the enemy exceeded five thousand.

It was now suggested to Baillie that, as he was only seven miles from Sir Hector Monro, he might reasonably expect that the general would move to his assistance, and therefore that, instead of remaining on the open plain, exposed to severe fire of the enemy's battery, the galling discharges of the irregular infantry, and the repeated assaults of the horsemen, it might be advisable to make a fresh attack on the whole of the battery; and as the ground on which it was planted was favourable for defence, it would be an excellent post to occupy till Sir Hector arrived.

Baillie, however, was so confident of immediate relief, that he determined to remain on the plain; but, in order to shelter his men from the severe fire of the enemy, he formed his infantry of an old ravine, while a heavy cannonade was kept up by his artillery. Tippoo again abandoned his guns, but his cavalry remained on our flanks ready to attack any detachment that might be sent to take possession of them.

The return of the formidable Hyder Ali

During the assaults on our line, the rear guard, having taken up a position of great strength, although entirely separated from the main body, had repulsed every hostile movement. At this period, a cloud of dust in our front convinced us that the long looked for aid of Monro was at length approaching and from a village in our front we observed several columns of infantry clothed in scarlet uniforms who advanced rapidly, beating the British Grenadier's march. A shout of joy rang through our ranks, but in a moment afterwards, a very different sensation pervaded the breast of everyone, for it was the army of Hyder that was approaching.

We subsequently ascertained that the Mysore prince, having received information from Tippoo of the position of Baillie left his camp standing, guarded by some thousands of polygars and irregulars; with the whole of his choice infantry, cavalry and artillery, he marched out from the rear of his camp, and by making a considerable circuit, eluded the vigilance of the British General, who did not discover the fact until four hours after Hyder had departed to join his son.

In a few minutes, the plain was covered with this formidable army, which from information obtained afterwards from some French officers of intelligence in the enemy's army, consisted, of twenty five battalions of sepoys, and seventy-five pieces of cannon, and twenty-five thousand cavalry, besides a host of polygars, peons, and rocket men.

A fresh body of artillery men resumed the fire from Tippoo's battery, while the bulk of Hyder's forces surrounded Colonel Baillie's small body of troops. The field train of our line kept up a brisk and severe fire on the enemy, which did immense executions on their congregated ranks. As yet, the rear guard remained quite unnoticed by Hyder, and from their position, they were themselves ignorant that a fresh body of the enemy had attacked our line. Had I known the exact state of affairs at this juncture, I am of the opinion that, by marching into the adjoining forest, which was of great depth, and extended twenty miles to the coast, the greater part of the rear guard would have escaped.

Panic in the British Army

The fire of the enemy became so heavy and murderous, that the greater part of our artillery men were killed while serving their guns, and an unfortunate shot having struck one of the tumbrils, three of them blew up successively, and many men perished in the explosion. The assailants now rushed forward in all directions, and our sepoys, who had manifested the greatest bravery during the whole action, now began to exhibit evident signs of terror; as very many of the officers were either slain or wounded, it was no longer practicable to keep up any discipline.

The consequence was, that, on the tumbrils exploding the whole of the native troops threw down their arms, and took off their uniforms, that they might not be recognised as having fought in the British ranks, by which means many of them escaped, being confounded among the tumultuous bands of the enemy.

Although our guns were lost, and our sepoys dispersed, Colonel Baillie rallied the remains of his army, now reduced to between five and six hundred Europeans, and seeing that all prospect of success was hopeless, he resolved to make every exertion to save this handful of men from the fury or the enemy's cavalry, who were elated with their success, through exasperated at their loss. For this purpose, although surrounded, he advanced some distance in front of the soldiers, and affixing a handkerchief on his sword, he demanded quarter. One of the principal chiefs then stepped forward, and assured him that, if his troops laid down their arms, their lives should be spared; and this he swore upon his sword. Baillie instantly ordered his men to ground their arms, when the whole of Hyder's cavalry rushed forward, and Baillie himself, after receiving a wound in the hand, was taken prisoner.

The troops, indignant, and driven to desperation by this infamous breech of faith, immediately resumed their arms, and delivered a heavy and destructive fire, which brought down vast numbers of the enemy, while those who escaped its effects rushed forward with the most infuriated rage, and commenced a savage slaughter; for Hyder had ordered that no quarter should be given, and his command was rigorously obeyed.

After the destruction of the line, the rear guard were doomed to experience a similar fate; but from the slow advance of the enemy, they seemed to consider all further hostilities at an end. However, as this detachment was totally ignorant of the destruction of the main body, a most determined resistance was made, and a very great loss was suffered by the enemy. The rear guard had the exclusive honour of being the only troops in the field who did not offer to capitulate, and they were the last who were sacrificed. At least three-

fourths of them were killed on the spot, and those whose lives were spared were the most dreadfully wounded.

I shall now conclude this rapid summary of the origin and events of the war with Hyder to the period of Baillie's destruction, merely observing, as a closing remark, that when intelligence of the dreadful catastrophe of the 10th of September reached Sir Hector Monro, he got the start of Hyder's victorious army by a few hours, and immediately retreated to Madras. He was solely indebted for his escape to the extraordinary vigilance he manifested in his retrograde march to that presidency.

[The following narrative contains an account of what befell the author and several of his companions in misfortune, from the time of their being taken prisoners by Hyder Ali, on the 10th of September, 1780, until his release from prison and return to Madras, on the 17th of April, 1784]

After my company had delivered their fire into the thronged ranks of the enemy by whom we were surrounded, their cavalry rushed in among us, and we were irretrievably broken; every one threw down his arms, hoping to preserve his life by surrender. We saw nothing before us but the infuriated enemy, brandishing their sabres and cutting at the miserable wretches who were at their mercy.

As my company, from their having been lately sent to the assistance of the rear guard, were the last body of British troops in the field, they were nearly slaughtered. The soldiers and officers of the main body, who had escaped the massacre ran towards me, the enemy's horse galloping after them, and thus the fugitives were driven into a hollow piece of ground, which had sheltered my company pretty well during the action; in this manner, about five hundred persons were crowded into this narrow space, which was quickly surrounded by the cavalry and a double row of pikemen. These latter formed part of Hyder's bodyguard, and, owing to the length of their weapons, they were enabled to thrust them into the middle of the crowd.

Our situation was now rendered beyond all description dreadful, from the screams of the wounded and the groans of the dying. Vast numbers were smothered in the middle of the hollow by the extraordinary pressure.

In this wretched condition, I recollected that I had in my pocket two hundred pagodas, being for the subsistence of my company, and it immediately struck me that this money might preserve my life. I therefore looked around, to observe the different countenances of the horsemen, and thinking that I distinguished one whose looks were less ferocious than those of his fellows, I pulled out my bag of pagodas, held it up, and beckoned him to approach me, which he instantly did, putting up his sword and dismounting. I at once

gave him the bag; he seemed astonished and highly gratified at the weight of its contents, which filled me with the most sanguine expectations.

After he had carefully secured it, he demanded my accoutrements, which I took off and presented to him. I now thought his cupidity would have been satisfied, but I was mistaken; he stripped me of all my apparel, except my inexpressibles, and one half of my shirt, having torn off the other to tie up my other garments in a bundle.

Though much chagrined at being thus reduced almost to a state of nudity, especially after the manner in which I had acted towards him, I still felt confident that he would give me his protection. .He had, however, no sooner mounted his horse than he drew his sabre, and after giving me three wounds, rode off, leaving me stung with rage at his vile usage, and blaming myself for having called him towards me, what with the loss of blood and the intense heat of the sun, I fainted, fully convinced that I was expiring, but pleased to think that my last moments were so gentle.

I do not know how long I remained in this situation, but I was roused from my stupor by an excruciating pain in my left shoulder-blade. On regaining my senses, I perceived that I had been again driven into the centre of the hollow, and that a dead man was laying on me. A pike had passed through his body and penetrated my shoulder, which had caused me the anguish I had just begun to experience.

In this state I remained for some time, when John Kelman, one of my company, called out, on observing me, that I was dead; to which I answered, "not yet, but hear about it."

Kelman then came close to me, and advised me to go and see three French hussars, whom he pointed out. Weakness, however, prevented my walking, and moreover I was so wedged in the crowd that I could not move myself. Kelman, being a very strong man, stretched out his hand to me, and my head being the only part of my body he could touch, he dragged me out by my hair, and carried me to the French, when I again fainted.

One of the hussars poured some arrack down my throat, by which I was revived, when I told him in French that I was an officer, and implored his protection and that of his comrades, which they promised me in the strongest terms, at once drawing their swords to keep off the horsemen, who sought every opportunity to cut me down.

At this time my preserver, John Kelman, was separated from us, and I afterwards ascertained with the deepest regret that he had been cut to pieces. The hussars hurried me to their commander, Lally, who was at some distance

with his corps. He immediately came to me and expressed his concern at my situation, ordered my wounds to be bound up, and placed me on one of his elephants, remarking that, as Hyder every moment expected General Monro on the field, he must leave me, and fall back to his own camp.

Though extremely enfeebled, I could but think of myself exceedingly fortunate at having got into such humane hands, and thankfulness for the dangers I had escaped prevented my reflecting on the probable treatment I might afterwards undergo. This comfortable state of mind, however, quickly passed away, for the first objects that I saw from the back of the elephant were six wounded men of my company, with ropes round their necks, being beaten in the most inhuman manner by a Moorman, who was leading them.

I now had a distant view of Hyder's army. His infantry were marching in the most regular manner to English music in the centre, his cavalry being on the flanks. Hyder himself was riding at the head of one of his battalions on a small dun horse, dressed in a blue silk jacket and a red turban. He rode up to Lally, with whom he conversed in the most familiar manner, and appeared to be highly pleased, bursting into fits of laughter.

After a march of ten miles, I arrived in the camp, extremely weak and fatigued, but Le Roy, one of the French Hussrs who had saved me from being cut down by the horseman, gave me some soup, a shirt, and long drawers, of which latter I had great need, my skin being one entire blister from the scorching heat of the sun. As this was the sixth night I had passed without sleep, I did not awake till morning, when I found out that, of four officers who had been brought in during the night, severely wounded, two were lying dead by my side.

On the 11th, in the morning, some of the French officers came and told me that Hyder had sent them orders to deliver up their prisoners to him; they expressed their grief at this resolution, but declared that the prince would inflict punishment even on them till they complied. They had secretly made this communication when the guards arrived, and in the most brutal manner drove us before them like a flock of sheep, striking us violently because our wounds prevented us from walking at the pace they required.

We were conducted into the presence of Hyder, who, after examining us all, and taking down our names, desired us to return to our quarters, "eat, drink, sleep and be happy." This gracious speech gave us all great consolation, and we departed full of hope.

On going out of my tent, a figure, covered all over with blood, came limping towards me, and called me by my name, and from the voice I at once recognised my old friend, David Baird. Bad as our situation was, this was a

most welcome meeting for both of us; his fortune had not been quite so good as mine, for he had been stripped, worse wounded than myself, and had lain all the day and the following night on the field of battle, every horseman thinking him mortally wounded, so that none would take the trouble of carrying him into camp. He had, however, managed to come in by himself, and he declared to me, at this interview, that the only pain he then felt was gnawing hunger. I informed him of Hyder's speech, which gratified him, and seeing some of my company at a short distance, and forgetting for a moment that I was a prisoner, I went to speak to them; but I had only advanced a few paces when the guards saw my intention, and a shower of blows, which fell all over me, soon made me recollect that I was not my own master.

We were now taken to a tent, where about twenty wounded officers were collected, and presented a spectacle that would have awakened pity in any other enemy than the one into whose ruthless hands we had fallen. Few of them had less than six wounds; every moment more sufferers were brought in from the field of battle, but great numbers, both officers and men, being stripped and severely wounded were left to perish on the scene of action.

Towards the evening of this day, Colonel Baillie and fifty-eight officers were assembled together in this tent, and some provisions, unfit for human food, were flung upon a large cloth spread on the ground, and we were desired to eat them or starve. Two French surgeons were sent to dress our wounds, but, as soon as they saw our numbers, they declared it would be impossible for them to dress so many without assistance; accordingly, after having bandaged up the wounds of about twenty of the most desperate cases, they went away, saying that they would apply to Hyder for extra aid.

On the morning of the 12th, it was ascertained that three officers had died during the night, and many others were delirious. Colonel Baillie, who was himself badly wounded, now requested the guards to send for the surgeons and some wholesome provisions; but the only answer he received was, that the army was just going to march twelve miles nearer Arcot, and when we came to that ground we should obtain all we wanted.

In a few minutes afterwards, the grand magar, which is a large drum mounted on a camel, beat as the signal for the march, and a strong guard came to our tent, informing us that conveyances were provided for twenty of the most severely wounded, and that all the rest of us were to walk. It was vain to reason or expostulate with our captors; abusive language and rude blows answered our declared inability to support the fatigue of the march; numbers threw themselves on the ground, protesting that they could not proceed, but their persecutors compelled them to rise, and dragged or drove

them forward; others attempted to provoke their tyrants, by words or gestures, to kill them on the spot, that they might escape protracted agony.

Thus goaded on as beasts of burden, we reached the new encampment late in the evening, four officers having died on the road. Three tents were pitched on a low sandy piece of ground, barely sufficient to contain thirty of our number, but we were told Hyder would not grant us any more accommodation.

The same kind of filthy provisions as had been served to us on the preceding day were placed before us, and on the morning of the 13th, the stench from our wounds infected the air we breathed.

Hyder, now, for the first time after he had dismissed us from his tent with the gracious speech which I have mentioned, enquired after his prisoners, and being informed of our dreadful situation, and strongly importuned by the earnest entreaties of the French officers, he permitted some of them to come and give us assistance. He also sent some provisions, but not sufficient, and he gave orders that every officer should receive a piece of cloth to cover himself with. He further presented Colonel Baillie with one thousand rupees; to distribute as he thought proper, and which, being equally divided among the officers and soldiers, gave every one five each.

The French officers, who were all badly off for clothes and money, nevertheless generously subscribed four hundred pagodas, which they placed in the hands of Colonel Baillie, he giving his bond for repayment. This was a most welcome supply, as it enabled us to purchase such articles as were absolutely necessary for our subsistence.

Still, our sufferings were becoming every hour more insupportable; the wounds of all were full of dirt and sand, and we had nothing to rest our bodies upon but the bare ground. The market people, who were permitted to come and sell us what we wanted, at an exorbitant price, found the air so offensive, that they soon discontinued their visits, and we should have perished in a few days, had not Hyder suddenly resolved to send away his prisoners to his own country.

On the morning of the 16th, the guards informed Colonel Baillie that all the prisoners were to be removed, except for himself and the seven officers next in rank to him. Of these, Baillie kept me and my friend Baird; and, as a very great indulgence, we were permitted to see the men of our respective companies and bid them farewell. If possible, they had been still worse treated than ourselves, and thinking that we might have sufficient influence to get their situation improved, they had determined, on the first opportunity that offered, to complain to us of their usage; but when they saw that we were

in nearly as deplorable a condition, they burst into tears, fervently praying that the day might come when they could take ample revenge for the indignities we had suffered. We advised them to keep their spirits up, and hope for better days; but our interview was not permitted to exceed a few minutes; we were then separated from our soldiers and brother officers and carried to another part of the camp.

I had not had my wounds dressed since I received them, the surgeons having been constantly occupied with the more severe cases; their painful state, the unsoundness of the provisions, the excessive heat of the sun, and the complicated hardships I had endured, threw me into a violent fever.

We were now put in a tent—the first shelter I had been under since I was taken prisoner. I thought myself particularly fortunate at this time in meeting one of my old servants, who also expressed his joy at the circumstance, but told me he had not tasted victuals for two days. As I was extremely ill, I gave him all my treasure, amounting to fifteen rupees, to take care of for me, and desired him to go to the bazaar and purchase something for himself, as well as to supply my wants; he promised to return immediately, but the treacherous villain, as soon as he had got my all, absconded, and I never heard of him afterwards. Baillie, likewise, had been plundered of his money in much the same manner; but Baillie was so generous as to give us, out of the little he had remaining, a pagoda each.

The Siege of Arcot

On the morning of the 18th, we were informed that Hyder was preparing to march to the siege of Arcot, and that he intended to carry us along with him. In a few minutes after we had received this notification, eight palanquins were brought for our conveyance. This indulgence, so different from all the treatment we had experienced, surprised us extremely, and we were also given to understand that our situation would henceforth be in every respect altered for the better; but we soon found out that the show of munificence was merely a political trick on the part of Hyder, for while we were marching along with the army, escorted by a large body of horse, our pittance of provisions was so scanty and so bad in quality, that it barely sufficed for our existence.

On the 19th, on our line of march, my old housekeeper, Mootoo, came up to me, and appeared extremely concerned at seeing me so very ill, expressing his determination to stay with me, at which I was very happy, but warned by recent perfidy, I took care to keep my remaining pagoda in my pocket.

On the 20th, Hyder's army came in sight of Arcot, from which the batteries began to fire at his advanced parties, and a shot from one of the forts killed one of our guard, upon which the main body of the army moved off and took possession of Walaganagar, a town nearly two miles distant from Arcot. Thither we were conducted; an old tent was pitched in one of the streets, into which we were put, but it was so extremely hot, that we begged to be removed to one of the houses on either side; our request was however, refused. We were surrounded by a strong guard, and a proclamation was sent through the town, threatening to cut off the nose and ears of any stranger who approached our tent.

Kistnarow, the prime minister of Hyder, used frequently to visit us, and we paid our court to him by every kind of submission. He was continually asking us questions as to the strength of the British army, which we answered with a servility of manner which the misery of our situation alone could excuse.

Being fully convinced that we had no further chance of surgical assistance, we were obliged to trust to nature for the cure of our wounds. The violent fever, by which I had been for some days afflicted, turned into a severe flux, and as I had no means of cleaning myself, I was covered over with vermin; as my circumstances did not admit of my purchasing the luxury of a comb, my servant, Mootoo, shaved my head with a piece of a glass bottle!

As the health of us all still remained very indifferent, we resolved to ask permission to write to Vellore, which was sixteen miles distant, for a surgeon. Colonel Baillie made this application to Kistnarow, who asked if we were sure that a surgeon would be sent to us on such a request; on his being answered in the affirmative, he said,

"If you have interest enough to procure a surgeon, the same power will enable you to desire the commanding officer to deliver up the fort to my master, and I desire that you will write to that effect."

Upon our refusing to comply with this demand, he observed, that we could not expect that any favour would be granted to us.

The wretched state of the British prisoners

On the 27th, Hyder summoned us to appear at his durbar, when Captain Rumney, who spoke the Moorish and Persian languages perfectly well, had a long conversation with him, and explained to him in detail the severe treatment we had undergone. Hyder appeared to commiserate our past sufferings, and when our audience was concluded, he desired us, as he had done before, to

go back to our quarters, "eat, drink, sleep, and be happy;" but Kistnarow, who was displeased at what had been communicated to Hyder, ordered that we should not have any victuals that day.

On the 28th, eight baskets of liquor were brought into our tent, with a letter from a French correspondent of Baillie's at Pondicherry, desiring that he would sign a receipt for the liquor, that the sender might be assured of its safe arrival; pen and ink were furnished, and Baillie wrote out the required acknowledgement.

Shortly afterwards, Kistnarow came into our tent, and asked us if we liked wine, and upon answering that we did, he ordered the guard to take the baskets out of our tent, saying that he would take care of them for us; but we never saw them again. This behaviour joined with our former treatment, made us almost desperate, and we determined ever afterwards to treat him with the most pointed contempt.

Accordingly, on his next visit, instead of rising and saluting him in the servile manner we had hitherto done, we sat upon the ground, without taking the least notice of him. He soon went away, evidently much mortified, and we pleased ourselves at the thought of his mortification. Some days elapsed before we saw him again.

On the 22nd of October, a fresh guard came to us, and desired Baird, myself and two others to prepare immediately for our departure to Seringapatam. I represented to them my utter prostration of strength, which rendered it physically impossible for me to undertake such a long journey. But remonstrance was useless; we had scarcely time to bid adieu to Baillie, when we were rudely pushed out of the tent, on the outside of which I met Kistnarow, with whom I again expostulated. He flew into a violent rage, shook a cane over my head, and said, better people than any of us were kept in cages all their lives!

We were now delivered over to a guard of matchlock peons, who received strict orders to keep a good lookout, lest we run away. The palanquins we formally had were again brought forward, but the carpet and bedding had been removed, which made for a painful conveyance.

In the evening we halted at Tinery, a small fort ten miles distant from Arcot, where my disorders became painfully aggravated, and I had not the least assistance for their relief. We passed the night between the high walls, and finding myself extremely unwell, I stepped to one side of our sleeping place, on a pressing occasion; but being observed by one of the guards, he ran after me, and thinking that I was attempting to escape, beat me back with repeated blows.

On the 23rd we continued our march, and arrived at Arnee in the evening. At this place all the worst of the wounded prisoners of Baillie's army were kept, and we earnestly besought the killadar to allow us to see them, which favour we could not obtain. My disorder had now become so violent, and had rendered me so feeble, that I could not stand, and my money, as well as Baird's had long since been expended, so that I was unable to purchase any medicines. The provisions were so filthy, that I abstained from eating them, lest I should increase my malady, and I had not tasted a thing since I left Arcot.

On the 24th we reached Pollore, which is a fort, after a march of twenty miles. Here my tortures became so acute, as almost to deprive me of speech, and the fatigues I had undergone, without sustenance, began to affect my senses. The nearer we approached to Hyder's country the more brutal became our treatment. The cattle of the villages were driven from their resting places, on which we were obliged to rest. Our miseries were greatly augmented by the conduct of our guards, who never commenced their march till the sun had risen, and the heat of it, particularly as we had not had any refreshment, was truly insupportable.

On the 27th, after a very long march, we reached Shangeranagore, a fort near the pass of the Carnatic into Mysore country. This last march completely overpowered me, and I was attacked with violent spasms and strong hiccough. It was evident I was now in the last stage of my disorder, and Baird and the rest of my companions did all in their power to induce me to take a little rice, but without effect. At this moment a sepoy of our guard came up to me, and after watching me some minutes, he offered to prepare some medicine, if I would take it. I told him I would do so thankfully, if he would give it me, for I had no money to pay for it; he said he did not want money from a prisoner, and went away.

The curious medicine of a compassionate sepoy

In a few minutes he returned, bringing with him three green pomegranates and a large bowl of sour milk. After mashing the fruit into a ball upon a stone, he mixed it with his hands in the milk, and desired me to drink the mixture. In any other situation, I should have certainly refused to take such a medicine; but, as it was, I swallowed it, though with great loathing, for the taste was most nauseous. He then desired me to endeavour to sleep, which I did, and in a few hours afterwards I awoke, much improved in health, my fever having abated, and the flux being less severe.

I now, for the first time since I left Arcot, ate a little boiled rice, and in the morning the sepoy came to see me, and was delighted with the efficacy of his prescription. I told him that I owed my life to his humanity, and that though I was poor there, I was rich in my own country, and that I would reward him if ever I returned. He said that he was not very rich himself, as his pay was only a pagoda and a half a month, but he drew out his little purse and offered me a rupee. This generous behaviour, so different from all I had hitherto experienced during my captivity, drew tears from my eyes; I thanked him for his liberality, but did not take his money.

On the morning of the 28th we continued our journey, and crossed the pass through the mountains, when we arrived at a large camp of Hyder's, there stationed for the purpose of sending provisions to his army in the Carnatic. I was still very weak, and on the commandant coming to see us, I asked permission to stay for a couple of days in his camp, that we might recruit our strength, assuring him that I felt that I should die before reaching Seringapatam unless I had some repose.

He furiously answered, that "I might die and be damned;" that he had the Nabob's orders to send us to his capital, and that if I died on the road, he would tie a rope around my legs and drag my body to its place of destination!

After this ferocious reply, I abandoned myself to my fate, more than ever convinced that nothing could be gained from the humanity of these ruffians. However, from this time I regained my health surprisingly every hour, and soon felt no other pain than that arising from extreme hunger, for our allowance was very scanty, and although we always commenced our march early in the morning, our guards never gave us any provisions until they had eaten their own victuals and taken a nap, so that it was generally ten at night before our rations were served.

The wretched prisoners exhibited to a jeering crowd

On the 30th, we arrived at a fort called Puhapatane, where the inhabitants of the surrounding country came flocking around us, as though we had been a parcel of wild beasts; our guards even took money for showing us; indeed we were the most miserable looking creatures. My plight was a most sorry one; with a shaven head, and a dirty shirt and trousers, the same having been given me by the French, and which I had now worn six weeks without having had them washed, I presented a ludicrous, if not a disgusting figure; but I was so accustomed to the scoffs and gibes of our captors, that I was quite unconcerned at their making themselves merry at my expense.

At this place, we were for the first time put in a house, and, in rummaging the rooms we found a large pot of milk, which we mixed with rice, and thus made an excellent meal. In the morning an old scolding women abused us roundly for stealing her milk, and in a few minutes the villagers thronged to our door, vilifying us as thieves; while the commandant vowed, if we were again detected in any similar abstraction of property, he would flog every one of us.

On the 1st of November, we arrived at a fort called Caurapatam. I here had a very narrow escape from the fury of an enraged Rajapoot, for happening to approach his fireplace when he was dressing his victuals, and putting my foot into the circle in which the cooking utensils were placed. He drew his sword, with the intention of striking; quickly perceiving my danger, I ran away, and sheltered myself behind a tree, when some of the guard came and asked the Rajapoot what I had done, who, with every sign of loathing, said that I had polluted his victuals, by placing my foot within his hallowed circle. I protested that I did not intend to either harm nor insult; that I was ignorant of their customs; with great trouble I escaped severe chastisement. As there was a pond of water near to our dwelling, I this day, for the first time, took my shirt off my back and sent my man Mootoo to wash it, it being as black as coal; I also gave him my trousers, to undergo the same ablution.

Nothing material occurred to us on our journey from this place to Seringapatam, except my very nearly having brought on a recurrence of my disorder by eating some green oranges, which I plucked in a grove where we halted. The indisposition thus caused proved, however, temporary. My wounds were now quite healed, without the slightest medical or surgical assistance.

Seringapatam and the descent of the prisoners into Hell

On the 6th of November, after a long march, we entered on a wide plain, and at two miles distance had a distinct view of Seringapatam. Our guard immediately gave a shout of joy; but our feelings were very different. When we reflected that we were approaching a place of confinement, from which we might never be released, and anticipating the most rigorous treatment from the usage we had already experienced from an enemy noted for his cruelties, especially towards the English, it is not wonderful that we were all plunged into the most desponding melancholy.

As we approached the capital of Mysore, we perceived that Seringapatam was built on a piece of land, where the river Cavery, having branched off into winding streams, again united, after having formed an island about eight miles in circumference; and on the opposite side of the river to which we

were advancing, we observed our place of confinement, which was a fort, having exceedingly high walls, and of very great length. The whole island was covered with large prosperous towns, and to travellers, possessing their freedom, the whole prospect would have been highly agreeable; but we only saw the dungeon at the end of the vista.

Boats had been provided, in which we were ferried across the Cavery, and a body of troops were ready on the bank, who escorted us to the fort, amidst the sound of warlike instruments—signals of rejoicing at the success of Hyder over the English. As we were the first prisoners of note who had been sent to the capital, thousands of people flocked around us, to gratify their curiosity and make their remarks; we were obliged to stand in a row, that they might have a distinct view of our appearance.

After having been conducted through various windings and turnings into the middle of the fort, which was in front of the grand parade, we were brought up to the durbar, where the killadar and other principal officers were waiting to receive us. We were ordered to advance towards them, but to halt at an appointed distance, and were once again commanded to stand in a row in the heat of the sun, without daring to move on one side or the other for shelter from the burning heat.

During this time the killadar amused himself by sending one of his inferior people to ask us a number of ridiculous questions, all of which we were too much dispirited not to answer with the greatest submission. After standing nearly six hours in this miserable condition, word was brought to the killadar that our place of confinement was prepared, to which we were conducted by a strong guard.

The building was on the right hand of the grand parade of the fort, and was in the shape of an oblong square, from which a single tiled roof in the form of a shed projected, and in four angles of the house were four small rooms or dungeons, without windows or the smallest aperture through which light could enter; in the centre of the building was an open space of a few yards, through which air was admitted, and on the outside, a very high wall, at the distance of ten yards.

When we were safely lodged, the killadar went away; another guard arrived, consisting of Moormen, who took up their station at the door of the inside of the square, whilst the other two strong bodies of peons kept sentinel at the door of the outer square. The person who had charge of the whole was a avider and Moorman, selected for his fidelity and bitter hatred of the English. His name was Mobit Khan; his countenance was the most villainous that could be conceived, and we afterwards found out that his character did not

belie his physiognomy. He introduced himself by telling us that he was our friend, and congratulated us on our good fortune to be lodged in his house, as it was the best gaol in Seringapatam; that Hyder had recently made it the prison of some persons of distinction, but had been under the necessity of putting them to death, as they plotted their escape; he therefore advised us to be cautious, and not indulge in any similar experiment.

These hints gave us the most gloomy thoughts, and the dirty condition of our dungeon increased our melancholy. We had not received a morsel of food this day, and Mobit Khan informed us that we must wait patiently till the next morning, as the killadar had important business to transact, but that on his arrival we would know what was to be our allowance.

The killadar came the next day, and gave to each of us a gold fanam, of the value of five pence sterling, and told us we should receive the same sum daily; he further observed that, as we had servants of our own, they would be permitted to go to the bazaar and lay out our money as we thought proper. We quite approved of this mode of expenditure, but urged the smallness of the sum, on which we could not possibly exist; he at once cut short all remonstrance by saying that such was the pleasure of his master, and it was useless to ask for more; that he had no discretionary power, and could not decide what was sufficient. We then told him that we were without clothes, or a single article to lay on the ground on which we had to sleep, and begged, with the most abject humility, that he would assist us in that respect.

He answered, that he had no orders from the Nabob, except as to our money allowance, and therefore could not comply with our request. He then left us. On his departure, Mobit Khan told us we need not ask for any more indulgence, as none would be granted; at the same time he avowed himself our firm friend, and advised us to place our money in his hands; he also said that, being better acquainted with the local customs than our servants could be, he would, to oblige us, undertake to lay out our daily pittance to the best advantage. Not then doubting his sincerity, we thankfully accepted the offer; but we soon repented, as he gave us just barely sufficient to support life, and never brought us any clothes, although we were nearly naked, and the evenings and mornings were extremely cold.

Strongly suspecting that our gaoler defrauded us of a great part of our allowance, we told him that we would in future lay out our own money. On hearing this he flew into a violent passion, and abused us in the grossest terms, and asked us if we dared think that a Mussulman would deign to cheat such miserable wretches as we were. As his anger was a smaller evil than starvation, we told him that we would complain to the killadar the next

time he visited us, he merely answered that, as we had desired our money to be entrusted to him, he would continue to expend it for us.

Several days elapsed before the killadar came; but as soon as he had made his appearance, we lodged our complaint, at which he seemed much surprised. Mobit Khan, however, affecting the utmost astonishment, solemnly asseverated that it was at our urgent request that he had laid out our money; that we never revoked our first orders, or he would have given up the charge entrusted to him with pleasure, and then he had the impudence to declare that he had disbursed a large sum of money out of his own pocket in giving us a variety of luxuries.

After this speech, he appealed to the guard for the truth of his statement, the whole of which they emphatically confirmed. Upon this the killadar reprimanded us most severely for basely attempting to injure the reputation of Mobit Khan, and even threatened to chastise us in public if we did not behave better; but at the same time he desired that we should have the entire management of our money.

We now felt ourselves extremely fortunate in recovering the control of our scanty pittance, at the cheap cost of abuse, to which we were accustomed, that it became a matter of indifference; and we determined, by the most rigid economy, to save, if possible, as much as would purchase some clothes. Henceforward, we experienced in Mobit Khan a most tyrannical and cruel enemy, and as we were entirely in his power, he rendered our lives as miserable as he could, for having denounced him to the killadar.

Our servants, however, were permitted to go to the bazaar and purchase such commodities as our finances would permit; but as it entirely depended on the caprice of our gaoler at what hour they should go to the market, it was very often late at night before he would allow their absence, so that we could seldom procure any provisions but of the worst kind, and at an extremely dear price. However, by the most rigorous frugality, we were enabled, in the course of a month, to purchase some clothes, although we almost starved ourselves.

Nothing remarkable occurred to us before the 10th of December, on which day the worst of the wounded prisoners of Baillies army, who had been sent to Arnee, to the number of twenty-one, were transferred to our gaol. Even in a dungeon, this was a most joyful meeting on both sides, but our comrades gave us a most dismal account of their sufferings since our separation in Hyder's camp. Number of those we left behind died on the road, through the cruelty of the guards, before they reached Arnee. The survivors were put into a loathsome prison, and so scantily supplied with provisions and clothes, that

they must infallibly have perished after a short detention, had not a French officer in Hyder's camp, at great personal risk, sent them a sum of money, which absolutely saved their lives. When they arrived among us they were much better clothed than we were, and still had some money remaining. They raised a subscription to supply our necessities. When we told them the amount of our allowance they seemed greatly surprised, as they had been promised a far larger sum.

On the next day, the killadar came, with a great number of attendants, and ordered us to stand in a row before him; having counted our numbers, he cautioned us against making any riot in prison, and delivered us, as usual a fanam each. Mobit Khan then openly complained to him that we were a set of very turbulent fellows, and begged that the guard might be augmented to enable him to enforce his authority.

The killadar replied that the guard was sufficient, but that he would put us in irons on the first disturbance. We told him that it was not our intention to behave ill, and that we had never done so, and then requested that, as our numbers were so considerably increased, he would remove us to a larger house; to this he would not listen, but left abruptly. As some parts of our prison were preferable to others, we divided it into different lots, and drew shares for the first choice; the berth which fell to me was in one of the dark rooms, which, through want of space, we were now compelled to inhabit.

On the 20th, the killadar came in a great hurry to our prison, with all his attendants, and after calling us out from our berths, he sent in the guards to remove every thing that belonged to us; all our bundles were accordingly placed before him, and he found that we had amongst us six knives and forks and two razors, which he said were very improper articles to remain in our custody, and they were accordingly delivered to Mobit Khan, with an order to allow us to have the knives and forks in the course of the day, but always deliver them to the guard at night.

We were granted the use of razors once a week, for the purpose of shaving, but during the operation, two sepoys were to stand over us, with drawn swords, lest we should cut our throats!

Six books were also found among us, and seized; these were the first volume of Smollett's *History of England*, and the third volume of Pope's works, one half of Dr Johnson's dictionary, a prayer book, and Mrs Glasse on the *Art of Cooking*. The guards were desired to deliver these to us at sunrise, but most particularly enjoined to take them back at sunset, the killadar believing that with the assistance of books, Europeans could do great mischief in the night. We were then sent back to our berths.

Necessity is the mother of invention. The adage is trite, but never was the truth of it more strikingly manifested than in the gaol of Seringapatam. Knowing full well that we must depend on ourselves for any comforts we might enjoy, we determined to labour and exercise whatever talents nature might have endowed us with, in making such necessary items as our situation demanded.

Our progress at first was slow, but our ingenuity and skill were daily elicited by the fresh exertions we made. We assisted each other, and in a short time each was provided with a cot to sleep upon, a table, and a stool. I was a very bad carpenter, and received much aid in that department from one of my companions, but had become an exceedingly good tailor, and now had three shirts and three pair of trousers of my own manufacture; I therefore made the clothes of those who helped in other articles.

These occupations enabled us to pass our time more agreeably than if we had been idle, and were accompanied by the sweet reward of industry; still our situation was very miserable, and our tyrannical gaoler seemed never satisfied but when he was abusing us in the grossest manner; he knew that we were completely in his power, and that remonstrance was in vain. We were rendered the more unhappy by feeling that he had acquired a permanent command over us.

On the 28th, our prison was the scene of a most tremendous uproar, in consequence of one of our servants having wrung the neck of a live fowl (which he had brought in the bazaar for his master), in the presence of some guards. As soon as they saw this act, in their eyes most heinous, they fell upon the servant with heavy blows, and rushing into our room, abused us all for allowing an animal to be killed without previously sending for a fakir to pray over it. Then they went to the killadar, and lodged their complaint; the magnitude of the crime excited his indignation, he ordered the culprit to be seized and punished. We earnestly besought his pardon on the grounds of ignorance, and, after much hesitation, he was forgiven; but we were told that, if we ever killed any animal in our prison, without having the usual ceremony performed, punishment would be inflicted upon us all with rigid severity.

As our servants had for some time past been allowed greater liberty in speaking to persons at the bazaar than when we first arrived, they mixed more familiarly with the people, and one day a letter was slipped into one of their hands by a black man, who desired that it might be given to us without the knowledge of the guard. It safely reached its destination, and proved to have been written by the privates of Baillie's army, who, to the number of three hundred, were imprisoned in a private room some distance from our

abode. They informed us that they had been treated in a most cruel manner before they reached Seringapatam, and that nearly one hundred of their comrades had died on the road, but that since their arrival, their usage had been better, and their allowance of provisions had been enlarged; which good fortune, they said, could only account for from the design of the killadar to entice them into Hyder's service; but they declared that they would undergo any severity rather than fight against their own country. This was the first time we had heard of them, and we were exceedingly glad that they were so much better off than we had anticipated.

January 1st, 1781. As we had for some time past determined to keep the new year as comfortably as our circumstances would allow, we had, ever since the arrival of the Arnee prisoners, been at great trouble and expense in fattening a bullock, which one of the officers had bought in the Carnatic, and which had been preserved for the approaching festival. We had for many days looked forward with pleasure to this event, and indeed our chief conversation turned on the many excellent dishes which the bullock would produce.

On the evening that we wished the animal to be killed, we requested Mobit Khan to bring a fakir to perform the usual ceremony; but instead of complying with our wishes, he abused us in the most shameful language, saying that we were a parcel of thieves, and that we had stolen the bullock out of some of the Nabob's villages, on our road to Seringapatam. It was in vain that we protested our innocence of theft, and affirmed that the animal had been justly paid for; our gaoler was resolved not to believe us, but went to the killadar and charged us with robbery.

On the reputation of Mobit's word and honour, the killadar ordered the bullock to be taken from us, and thus we were disappointed in our long expected entertainment. We were now exasperated beyond measure that our lives should be so embittered by the tyrannical disposition of this villain, whose arbitrary reign seemed to be with out appeal; but we determined to try, at some future time, whether we could not break our bonds by an unanimous complaint against his despotic sway.

January 10th, Baird's wounds and those of another prisoner began to break out afresh, and gave them great pain. After repeated applications the killadar at length permitted the French surgeon of the place to come once a day to the prison. This was a point we had been long endeavouring to gain, not only for his medical assistance, but we hoped he would tell us the news, and convey some letters to our friends, from whom we might receive money through his agency. But we were disappointed in both these respects; he was completely

ignorant of his profession, nor had he any medicines and Mobit Khan, or some of the guard, were always present during the whole time of his visit.

March 10th, as the weather, ever since the beginning of the year, had been extremely hot, we were, after repeated entreaties, permitted to remain in the outer square during the day. This was absolute luxury, as it not only gave us a healthful power of locomotion, but afforded us a view of the grand parade, which was a source of great amusement, especially after our long and close confinement.

The greatest part of the houses or countries around us were crowded with dense multitudes of persons torn from the Carnatic, all of whom had been compelled to embrace the Mahomedan religion; about three thousand of these unwilling proselytes, being young men, were formed into different battalions, and exercised every morning and evening on parade by two or three French officers, who, did not seem very well qualified to instruct the new recruits in military duty.

At another part of the parade, about an equal number of young women and girls, also natives of the Carnatic, were confined together in a large square house, and were reserved for marriage with the boys when grown up. The information we obtained from the sepoys, who also told us that Hyder had driven the great majority of the Carnatic prisoners into the interior and remoter parts of his country, in order to cultivate those districts which lay waste from the want of population.

Of these circumstances we had till now been ignorant, but they satisfied us that Hyder was paying as much attention to the improvement of his agricultural resources as the discipline of his army. Indeed, when we first arrived at Seringapatam, we had flattered ourselves that the superior forces of the English would soon compel Hyder to ask for peace; but as we daily witnessed large quantities of various kinds of stores continually being removed from the capital, and knew that the Carnatic, from the ravages it had sustained, was unable to supply the wants of our own army, our thoughts became more than ever gloomy and desponding, and our hopes of deliverance fainter and fainter.

May 10th, We had now passed a nearly a month without anything occurring different from our usual treatment, and we began to think that the extent of our bad usage had reached its limit; but we were grievously mistaken. On this day when called out, as it was customary in the morning, to be inspected and counted, a number of blacksmiths came into our prison with loads of irons on their backs, which they threw on the ground, and immediately went away.

This novel spectacle caused us the most cruel alarm, and we interrogated our guard on the subject, but they refused to answer our inquiries. We reviewed our past conduct to find out if any part of it could afford a justifiable pretext for so severe a punishment as the nature of the preparations led us to anticipate, and we felt innocent. We remained in a horrible perplexity till the afternoon, when the killadar, accompanied by all the officers of the garrison and a strong guard, made his appearance, and ordered us to be put in irons.

Captain Lucas, who spoke the language of the country remarkably well, was deputed, on this important occasion to act as our interpreter, and to convey our unanimous sentiments. He executed his task most heroically. He asked the killadar what crime we had been guilty of to merit such infamous treatment; he insisted that our uniform behaviour had been not merely submissive but absolutely peaceful, and that ever since our captivity we had experienced nothing but insults upon insults, not simply from the principal officers, but even from common sepoys, and that we had endure all with patience; he expressed his astonishment at the very idea of loading men with chains, whose only crime had been serving their country.

This was the first speech we had ventured to deliver with firmness and energy, and so exasperated were the attendants of the killadar that they menaced Captain Lucas with chastisement, for what they called his insolence and presumption.

Our gallant comrade, however, nothing daunted by their threatening words and gestures, asked the killadar, in a tone of impressive dignity, if it was with his approbation that a grey haired soldier like himself, who had received twelve wounds which rendered him a cripple for fife, should, after all his hardships, meet with the unmerited insult of being shamefully put into irons?

The killadar, who really felt the infamy of his own position, as the instrument of such an atrocious proceeding, for the first time answered the complaint with mildness. He said, we did not know the nature of his master's order, nor the spirit of his government; that, exalted as his own station was, Hyder in a moment would reduce him to nothingness, if he deviated in the smallest degree from the instructions he had received, whether those instructions were to load us with favours or overwhelm us with misery; and he concluded by declaring, that whatever he did was in obedience to the orders of the Nabob. Then, with a tone of authority, he ordered the guard to do their duty, and departed.

Mobit Khan now assumed the command, and with his usual abuse desired us to come forward, that the blacksmiths might rivet the irons on our legs. All remonstrance being in vain, we submitted to our fate as men long familiarized

with misfortune, and as we had hitherto kept up our spirits, we were determined not to be cast down by this fresh act of barbarity, but to look forward to better days.

By ten that night we were all fettered, the guards were increased on the following day throughout the different parts of the gaol; the rigour of our treatment became more severe, and many articles that we had been permitted to purchase were prohibited; the French surgeon who had attended us was withdrawn, and we were informed by the killadar that if we were detected in carrying on any correspondence with other prisoners in the fort, he would cut off our ears and noses.

Severe as this threat was, we determined to brave it, rather than lose an opportunity of learning news of our army; and whenever we heard of the arrival of any fresh prisoners, we left no means unattempted to receive communications, although intelligence derived through this channel was frequently more calculated to distress our spirits than raise our hopes. We even used to bribe the sepoys of our guard to inform us if our army was successful, and they used to fabricate accounts at their own caprice, either favourable or adverse, according to the magnitude of the sum they received; so that on one day our troops were victorious and peace was nearly concluded, and on the next, they would declare that Hyder had completed the conquest of the Carnatic, and that crowds of prisoners were flocking to Seringapatam. Our eagerness for news, which we greedily courted, though always doubting its authenticity, made our lives even more miserable, though very restless, than if we had been incurious.

May 17th, I this day made a most agreeable discovery in my berth, for as I was fixing a rope to a point near the roof, I pulled out a tile, and on looking through the hole, I was agreeably surprised to find that this part of the prison looked into the principal street of the town; the vast concourse of people and the various objects that were constantly passing backwards and forwards afforded me much amusement. I took care to replace the tile so that I could move it to either side I pleased, keeping the aperture closed when I suspected a visit from the guards.

We had purchased some leather to make a kind of spatterdashes of, that the pressure of the irons on our legs might be less inconvenient, and with this relief we were able to walk a little without much pain; but as the links from ring to ring were not above eight inches in length our step was so much confined, that a very slight exertion in extending the foot was very fatiguing. Thus deprived of the bodily exercise we had formally enjoyed we were compelled to devise other means of killing our time. With coarse paper and cloth we made cards, and with strips of bamboo, backgammon boards—in

both of which manufactures we afterwards arrived at a very creditable degree of excellence—and thus beguiled our tedious hours.

The prison at this time began to swarm with large rats, and we laid wagers who would kill the greatest number in twenty four hours. In a few hours we exterminated more than one hundred of these vermin, and as the sepoys have not the same aversion to these animals as Europeans, they gladly removed them and curried them for their meals.

May 20th, Colonel Baillie, and two other officers whom Hyder had detained in his camp, arrived this day, and were put into a house opposite our own; and as their servants met ours at the bazaar, we received a note from our commander, informing us that, after the capture of Arcot, they had been confined in a dark room in the inner fort; but as soon as our army, under General Coote, moved from Madras, Hyder instantly took the field, and having put them in irons, sent them to Seringapatam, this statement gave us great satisfaction, as it revived our hopes that our troops would soon gain a decided superiority.

May 25th, We were this day greatly surprised, on looking out on to the grand parade, to see a number of white men, clothed in Mahomedan dress, drilling the black people in English discipline and tactics. We of course made some enquiries of our guard, who told us that the men we observed were some of our private soldiers, who, being wearied at the length of their confinement, had entered the Nabob's service, and embraced the Mahomedan religion.

This account filled us with profound grief, nor could we doubt its perfect truth, as we plainly saw the men teaching our enemies the art of war; we condemned them unscrupulously as a set of villains, who had basely abandoned their country, and merited death if ever they were caught. However, in a few days, we received a letter from the soldiers prison, informing us that the killadar had selected from amongst them all the young men, and asked them to enter the service; that they unanimously refused, when they were dragged by a strong guard from their companions, who had heard nothing of them since their removal.

We now changed our sentiments in respect of these unfortunate fellows, the more especially as we plainly saw that when they came upon parade, they made signs to us, as if they wanted to justify or excuse their conduct; we therefore waited with the greatest suspense for the opportunity of ascertaining whether their drilling was voluntary or compulsory, and at length Colonel Baillie, who had been as much surprised as ourselves at this

extraordinary event, received a letter from them, which he afterwards sent to us. The following is a literal copy:

"Sir, Your servant casting a sign to us some time ago, gives us reason to think that you would be desirous to know something of our present unheard of unfortunate situation, not to be equalled in the history or account of any other nation.

On Wednesday last, the Brahmin came into our prison and having called out the men, he selected the underwritten from the rest; smiths being ready to knock off the irons, without giving us the smallest idea of what was to ensue. He then conducted us to the Nabob, when they informed us upon what account we were released, and in a very flattering manner requested us to take service; however, all their promises and tenders were refused with disdain by fourteen of us.

They then changed their tone, and menaced us in the severest manner, the jemmaul major threatened to take our lives. We were conducted from thence to a large square, the repository or seminary of the boys you see every night at exercise. Upon our arrival there, how great was our astonishment to find two English lads among those boys, who had been circumcised about three months before our arrival, one of whom, a Mr Clark, was an ensign in the 2nd battalion 2nd regiment, and the other a private in the same regiment!

They informed us that we were to be circumcised that night, and they had scarcely finished telling us, when the guards came in, accompanied by a barber. You, Sir, will sure conceive what our situation was, dragged to what every Christian in the universe utterly abhors, and surrounded by enemies whose very souls are ten times darker than their visage.

After some resistance on the part of every one of us, we were obliged to sit down and suffer ourselves to be shaved; we remained in the most cruel uncertainty for three or four hours, when our ill favoured guard brought us a dose of majum each, and obliged us to eat it; it worked differently on us, some were insensible, others were not; a little after sunset, the surgeon came and with him thirty or forty Cafferies, who seized us, and held us fast till the operation was performed; we remained under care, upon six cash per day, with mutton, rice etc.

On the 30th, we were conducted to the cicheries, and there questioned if we would teach these boys the English discipline, for which we should receive one fanam per day each, with provisions, clothes etc., which we hope, in our present situation, you will not construe into any disaffection to our officers or country, it being all force and constraint.

However, actuated by a lively sorrow that you in your present distressful condition should be a witness to the same, that were so lately under your command, whose indulgence and paternal care, particularly on the day of action was second to none, we humbly make bold to assure you, that every man in this and the other prisons are at any time ready to lay down their lives, and rescue you from the smallest harm; our fondness was the cause of our running the hazard of sending this, and most heartily and sincerely wishing to see you released, and in the situation of releasing us unfortunate victims from the chains of this barbarian.

John Cowen, John Macinmore, Alexander Ross, James Sinclair, Robert Mackenzie, of Captain Baird's company; Corporal Anderson, Donald Smart of Captain Lindsay's company; and fifteen other of the East India Company's soldiers.

This account of the miserable situation of our men made us very unhappy, as we never before this had the smallest idea that Hyder would proceed to such extremities as forcing his prisoners into his service, and the daily sight of these men, who had been under our command, exercising our enemies before our face, was the most afflicting spectacle that could have been presented to our view. We were perfectly astounded that Ensign Clark being among them, but we were soon afterwards informed of the real state of the case; he had involved himself in debt after his arrival at Madras, and in despair had taken the rash step of deserting to the enemy, of which, he said, he should ever afterwards repent.

July 10th, The same Brahmin who had taken out the unfortunate soldiers from the other prisons came this day to ours, and desired us to turn out of our berths, which we did, though with the greatest alarm that our fate would be the same as the soldiers. We, however, determined to undergo every extremity rather than comply, or be separated from each other.

The Brahmin sat down on a carpet by the guard, and calling us towards him, told us he was ordered by Hyder to ask if we were willing to enter his service, offering us more pay and higher command than we had in our own army. Captain Lucas told him that we were obliged to the Nabob for his offers, but that we were officers and gentlemen, and neither the most alluring inducements nor the severest torments would ever make us abandon our religion or our country.

The Brahmin went away the instant Captain Lucas had finished his answer. At this we were overjoyed, congratulating ourselves on our escape; but when the first transports of joy had subsided, our apprehensions returned, lest we should have another visit, which might terminate less favourably.

In other respects we had by this time accommodated our ideas to our situation, and although our allowance was hardly sufficient to procure us the common necessaries of life, yet we all acknowledged that, if our circumstances had enabled us to indulge our appetites, it would have been very prejudicial to our health, in our confined situation, without fresh air or the means of taking any exercise. Indeed the manner of our treatment and the mode of our living were now become so regular, that the occurrences of one week were the same as those of the preceding. I will give a sketch of how I passed my time, and it will serve for my companions as well as myself. A diary of seven days will suffice for the routine of nearly four years.

Monday. Mobit Khan comes into the yard at six in the morning, with half of the guard, and after abusing us for some minutes, desires us to turn out immediately for muster, which we do, grumbling very much, on getting out of our cots, at being obliged to stand in a row, twice a day, to be mustered, for half an hour, like a herd of cattle.

Mobit Khan, on whom we had bestowed the name of 'Bruin', called us a parcel of mutinous rascals, tells us that the Nabob is too good for us, and that our posteriors have grown fat from the excess of his bounty and our laziness.

The rivets of the irons are now examined to be sure that they are fast; after which the knives and forks are delivered to us.

Then the purveyor of sour milk comes to the door of the prison; he takes every possible advantage of us, and sells it very dear; those who eat rice for breakfast, buy a small portion from him, and tell him that he mixes water with the milk; he gives them the lie in the most direct terms, and appeals to Bruin, who declares the milk as good as ever he tasted.

Next the baker makes his appearance; he has not many customers, but those who have delicate stomachs, and look more to quality than quantity, buy some of the bread.

Our boys are now desired to prepare themselves, and go to the bazaar with the guard; we give them particular instructions to pick up all the news they can. Then we play at cards, or catch rats and mice, during the forenoon, till the servants come back. My man Mootoo tells me there is no news today, and that everything is dear in the bazaar; I am obliged to dine on rice and ghee; I suspect Mootoo of having cheated me of some of my rice; am obliged to eat very moderately at present, as my shirts are now worn out, and I am saving to buy a piece of cloth; it will be more than six weeks before I can save enough to buy others.

Tuesday. I got up this morning at the usual hour; went through the usual ceremonies. Looked out of my peep hole; saw a vast number of Brahmin girls going down to the river to wash; four or five hundred horsemen pass by, guarding a multitude of Carnatic prisoners; a Moorman of high family move on in great state, in celebration of his marriage, his wife being carried in a covered palanquin; two old Moorwomen under the house scolding; a crowd of people about them, to whom they are telling their story. Close my tile, for fear that some of them might look up and observe me. Today have curry and rice for my dinner, and plenty of it, as my mess mate is unwell and I demolish his allowance.

Wednesday. I finish a pack of cards today, the workmanship is much admired. Baird likewise finishes a backgammon table, I sell my cards for a fanam; have a cutaneous eruption, which shall be nameless, owing to the badness of the water; a dog eats up half a fanam's worth of brimstone and butter; threaten to kill him if I catch him in my berth. A very rainy disagreeable day; a most unwholesome smell in the prison, arising from stagnant water and a heap of rubbish; the rain comes through the roof and wets every thing.

Thursday. Today, have some stewed mutton and bread for my dinner. It is very good, but not enough of it. This is a very expensive dinner. Sheik Husseen, of the guard, tells us that our army has beaten Hyder, and that peace was to be concluded. In the evening another sepoy declares that the English had been signally defeated, and that Hyder was besieging Madras. Greater numbers of people are at exercise upon the parade than usual; the Europeans make signs to us, when we observe a Moorman beating them; our men look in the direction of Colonel Baillie's prison, and make signs to one another. I wrestle with Baird; his foot catches the links of my irons, and he is thrown down, receiving a scratch on the face. Bruin threatens to thrash me for fighting, saying that I am the property of his sovereign, and that I must neither lame myself or any of my companions.

Friday. Am much surprised today at hearing a salute of twenty-one guns; I am told by Bruin that our army is totally destroyed, and that the prisoners would arrive in a few days; am most melancholy at the news, but afterwards ascertain that the cause of the rejoicing was the narrow escape of Hyder from being killed by a shot from the ramparts of Trichinopoly.

A large palace is now being built at the end of our prison, as a present from Hyder to Tippoo Sahib, for his gallant behaviour against the English. The killadar come to our prison today, to know if any of us are blacksmiths or carpenters, and that he would give us great pay if we would work for him. We are much mortified by this request.

I lose my dinner today, a rice pudding, for the pot was burnt though at the bottom, and the contents fell into the fire. Standing on my bed to look out of my peep hole, it tumbles down, and I am obliged to sleep on the floor till I can repair it, and pass the rest of the day in a very bad humour.

Saturday. Have curry and rice for dinner. The sepoys tell us that our king's son had arrived at Madras with a quantity of wooden houses, and that numbers of our men are landing out of their bellies (that was their expression); they said that our prince was resolved to take Seringapatam, and make Hyder carry his palanquin, for his usage of us.

It was my turn today to buy oil for the use of our prison, a severe expense.

A great commotion in our prison. Mootoo brings me a letter from a sergeant of my company, who also sent me a duck and a handkerchief. I sent him a note thanking him for his present, but desired him not to repeat his bounty, as I was determined to live off my own allowance.

Sunday. The washerman brings our clean clothes, for which we pay him a fanam a month each; a severe deduction form our allowance. My leather spatter dashes are worn out by the friction of my irons, it costs me half a fanam to buy another. Am tormented every day by a parcel of gentlemen collecting at the end of my berth to talk politics and smoke cheroots; advise them to spend their time in mending the holes in their shirts, as I do, rather than trouble themselves about settling the balance of power in India and Europe, as they will not get out of prison the sooner for their speculations. They are much offended, and tell me I deserve to be a prisoner all my life, for want of curiosity.

Have six eggs for my dinner; find five of them rotten, and am about to throw them away, but having a voracious appetite, I pause and eat them, excusing my want of taste by reflecting upon one fanam a day ought not to be scrupulously nice in his dietary.

October 10th. We were this day in great spirits upon finding our present guard was to be relieved, and another appointed. Mobit Khan had, some days before, insulted one of the gentlemen, and, contrary to our usual submissive conduct, we surrounded him and threatened to take his life, after having roundly abused him; he was extremely frightened, and after he had disengaged himself, swore that he would have our noses and ears cut off for our behaviour. He went off in a great rage to the killadar, complaining that we had beaten him, and intended to attack the fort.

The killadar soon made his appearance, and although we were all extremely alarmed, we told him there could not be a more peaceable set of prisoners

than we were, but that we had been so long and so cruelly insulted by this villain, that we would rather lose our lives than submit to it any longer, and therefore desired that he would send us a new commander. The killadar abused us in the severest manner, and said he would order us to be chained to the ground.

However, we heard no more of the matter, and on this day a guard of Rajpoots came and relived the one that was on duty. We soon found that we had made a most happy exchange, for although the Rajpoots were extremely passionate, and apt to do violent acts while their rage lasted, yet they never failed, when they were cool, to express sorrow for their conduct, and even ask us to forgive them; they were indeed, in every respect much better than the Moormen, and more acquainted with the habits of Europeans.

November 6th. There were great rejoicings on the parade, which was enclosed. Wrestling matches, dancing girls, and combats of wild beasts were exhibited in front of the palace of the rajah, who is permitted by Hyder to show himself once a year to the people from a balcony, as the old Gentoo government is still held in great veneration, and Hyder finds it politic to call himself the rajah's prime minister and general. During all the rest of the year he is kept a close prisoner in his palace, and Hyder, out of the revenues of the country, allows him a lakh of rupees a year for the support of his family.

November 15th. We were this day much concerned to hear that three hundred privates in the another prison were removed to another fort called Chittalderry, in a distant part of the country. The reason of this, we were told, was that the number of Carnatic prisoners and of new Mussulmans in the fort, together with the European prisoners, had alarmed the authorities, lest they should rise and overpower the guards. The feasibility of this had often struck us, and a set of men in our situation, rendered desperate by the certainty of death if we miscarried, would have been a very formidable enemy.

November 29th. Colonel Baillie, this day, died in irons in his prison. He had long been in a very bad state of health, and for many months had solicited the killadar to allow a surgeon to give him some assistance; but he refused, saying that he had no such orders from the Nabob, and therefore dare not send him one. Had Hyder commanded him to be put to death, the sentence would not have been so cruel as this infamous treatment.

January 1st 1782. This day ushered in the new year, and although we had been prisoners for up to sixteen months, the prospect of deliverance from our present miserable condition seemed as far distant as ever. Most of us had now got swellings on our legs from the weight of our irons and the confined state of our limbs.

February 5th. The present killadar of Seringapatam is appointed collector of the Nabob's revenues and another has arrived from the camp to hold this appointment. His name is Seedy Behy; he was taken prisoner when a boy, and Hyder made him a Mussulman, since which he has become one of the chief's favourites. He came this day to our prison to muster us, and behaved in a much kinder manner than his predecessor ever did.

March 9th. We had for sometime past entertained hopes that Hyder would be content with the men whom he had already forced to embrace the Mahomedan religion, as he had not molested any of the prisoners for a considerable time in that respect. We were, however, greatly deceived in these expectations, as we this day observed on the parade near one hundred white men in Moorish dress, which was so large a numerical augmentation, that we justly suspected him of having made additional unwilling proselytes to his religion, and of this we were more persuaded by the frequent and earnest signs they made to us. It was some days before we could send them a letter, but we at last succeeded, and by the same opportunity we received two letter from them, the contents of which filled us with grief and astonishment. The following are copies:

"Gentlemen: We were yesterday agreeably surprised to receive a letter from you, which has been our constant wish since we came here, and are extremely obliged to you for the trouble you must have been at in forwarding it to us, having made many attempts ourselves, but we never could succeed. We are particularly thankful for the concern you feel on our account; and the promises you make us of representing our situation to those in whose power it will be to rescue us from our miserable situation. You have requested us to relate to you the particulars of our ill fortune, and also to answer some questions, which you have put down, with both of which we will readily comply, so far as it lies within our power, and are sorry we cannot give you so satisfactory an account as you probably expect, we having been surrounded by the grand army in January last, and left in Vellore. The news we send we obtained from Ensign Byrn, who came to Vellore in June with one company of sepoys and a number of polygars, with provisions for the garrison, and we being anxious to rejoin the army, and return with him, left Vellore, but we had not quitted the place eighteen hours, when Tippoo's whole force appeared, and came down upon us. We fought them for some time, when the polygars fled and were cut to pieces by the horse.

Thus deserted, most of the sepoys killed, and our ammunition exhausted, we hoisted a white handkerchief for quarter, which was immediately granted, and we were made prisoners by a French officer, and Byrn by a black commander. We remained in Tippoo Sahib's camp, and were very well used,

but when we arrived at his father's, we had reason to repent the exchange, receiving only a measure of rice a day, we remained with him five days, on the last of which we were sent for by the Kistna Row, who ordered Mr Rutledge into irons, but both of us to be put with a parcel of small boys.

Next morning, we were marched off to Seringapatam, and after five days were overtaken by Byrn, and Lieutenant Cruitzen, of the cavalry, who, with a single troop, and not with the whole regiment, as has been represented to you, was cut off near Arnee. We were much surprised to find that we were bound for different places, but we never had the least suspicion of their horrid intentions with regard to us, till we reached Seringapatam, when, instead of being put amongst you, we were marched with the boys into a large square building, a mile from the fort, where we found nine Europeans, and were almost rendered speechless when they told us they had all been made Mussulmans against their inclinations, and that it was most probable that we should share the same fate.

We were soon reduced to a most miserable state, as different parties of our guard came to our quarters every hour of the day, sometime making great promises if we would consent to embrace their religion, and at others with drawn swords, chahbacks, and ropes ready to tie us, with barbers in their rear to shave us. This plan they continued for seven or eight days; but finding their threats and promises ineffectual, they adopted another method of compassing their vile ends, by separating us one from the other, and allowing no one to speak to us. This mode of treatment producing no more influence on our determination than the former, the jemadar took compassion on us, and wrote to Hyder on our behalf.

During the time we waited for an answer, we imagined that they had dropped their infamous intentions, and daily expected to be sent to your quarters. This, however, proved but a dream, which was completely dispelled on the 17th by the appearance of ten or twelve stout fellows, with chanbacks in their hands, and as many Cafferies with ropes to tie us. They made no ceremony, but seized and bound us at once, and cut off our hair, then they walked away like villains who had been trained up to their business, leaving us to lament our hard fate.

In three days, the same scoundrels came back, seized and bound us as before, and stood over us while they obliged us to eat some stuff that nearly deprived us of our senses; on the same evening they accomplished their infamous design. During the time we were with them, we would take nothing but rice, nor would we permit then to take off our irons, which they offered to do, lest they might imagine we were content with our situation. We now receive a fanam a day, and are obliged to drill a number of boys, sent from

the Carnatic, and who are kept in these squares. Thank God, what they know will never do the Company any harm.

"The French, although driven effectually off the coast, have unfortunately fallen in with two or three transports bound to the fleet, out of which, together with the crew of the *Hannibal,* taken off the Cape, they collected about five hundred men and officers, all of whom they scandalously delivered up to Hyder. He has since picked out from among them fifty-five young men and boys, who are now in the fort, and have been made Mussulmans; among them are five midshipmen. It is not, however, we hope to be doubted that the French will suffer greatly in the eyes of Europe for such unchristian behaviour. Wishing you all a speedy release, we remain, gentlemen, your unfortunate brother officers and friends, James Speediman and Richard Rutledge, lieutenants of artillery."

The following letter was from the prisoners surrendered by the French to Hyder:

"Gentlemen: On the 30th of June, the French sent all their prisoners on shore at Cuddalore, and scandalously delivered them into the hands of Hyder, and he marched us to Chillambrum. On the 12th of August, after suffering the most cruel hardships, we were marched to Bangalore, and on the 22nd of October, they picked out fifty-one of the smallest men and officers, and sent them to Seringapatam. On the 7th of November, they by force shaved our heads, and on the 10th made us Mussulmans. Since we have been here they have given us nothing to sleep on but old mats. On the 17th the town major came to see us just before they shaved us, and told us that we would never be released, but kept here and be considered as the Nabob's sons, which makes us very unhappy, thinking that we shall never again see our native country. But when you are exchanged, we hope that you will make known our case to our fellow subjects. Mr Anslin would be glad to hear from you if agreeable to you; we have here amongst the sufferers Masters Le Sage, Anslin, and Drake, midshipmen of the *Hannibal,* of fifty guns; none of the officers of the *Chaser,* of eighteen guns, are here; Mr Wilkinson, of the *Brother,* transport, midshipman; Mr Hardiman, masters mate, of the *Resolution,* transport; none of the officers of the Company's ships *Yarmont* and *Fortitude;* the number of men here of the above ships is forty-four; the rest are officers."

These two letters once more rendered our minds perfectly miserable. and we could only lament the hard fate of these unfortunate men, without being able to mitigate their sufferings. Indeed, we all of us now expected in a short time to suffer the same treatment, and all our past miseries we now considered trifling compared with the thoughts of being compelled to embrace the

Mahometan religion, as if it was a moral certainty, if that event took place, we should never be permitted to return to our own country.

March 9th. This day we received accounts from a European prisoner that Sidar Khan, Hyder's nephew, who commanded the Mysore army before Tellicherry, was entirely defeated, and himself taken prisoner. The sepoys at the same time informed us, that the Nabob was about to make peace, and that it would be soon concluded.

March 20th. We had for some time past made the remark, that whenever our hopes were in some measure raised by good intelligence, it was generally followed by some alarming occurrence which soon dashed our expectations to the ground; and on this day the remark was fully verified. Early in the morning, a very strong guard came into our prison, followed by twenty-two officers, in as deplorable condition as dirt and wounds could reduce them to, and to crown our misfortunes, they informed us they belonged to the army of Colonel Braithwaite, who had advanced too far from the Tanjore capital, in order to protect the inhabitants while they were collecting grain.

Tippoo Sahib, who lay with his army upon the red hills of Pondicherry, made two astonishing rapid marches, and attacked the camp before the spies could give them the least intelligence of their approach; however, for the space of two days, they sustained the repeated attacks of the enemy with greatly inferior forces, but having during that time lost above half their numbers, and seeing no hope of relief, they were under the necessity of asking for quarter, which Tippoo immediately granted, and treated them with the greatest humanity while they remained with him; but when they were sent to Hyder, he behaved towards them with the greatest cruelty. They further told us, that there was now no army in the field in the southern countries, and that it was supposed that all the garrisons, in the course of a month, must fall into the hands of the enemy. To complete our misfortunes, the French fleet at this time had arrived on the coast, with a body of troops for the assistance of Hyder, who was now fully bent upon expelling the English, at least out of the Carnatic.

To a set of men like us, who had been two years prisoners, and who knew that our deliverance totally depended on the success of our arms, nothing could have been more dreadful than the news of these complicated misfortunes. But our mental sufferings were soon to be aggravated by physical evils, which came more immediately home to us, and absorbed all our other thoughts.

Our prison, which was before too small for our numbers now became suffocating crowded, for although we were permitted to occupy the outer square since the arrival of Colonel Braithwaite's officers, yet their addition,

and the bad quality of the air, caused almost all of us to fall sick. To complete our misfortunes, the monsoon set in in a much severer manner than usual, and what with the quantity of rain that overflowed our prison, the badness of the water we were compelled to drink, and our want of clothes to shelter us against the inclemency of the weather, a kind of disorder, like the gaol distemper, crept in among us.

Myself and four others were attacked more severely than the rest with violent bloody fluxes, and as we were in a very dangerous state , we made repeated application for the European surgeon, but the killadar refused our request, though he offered to send us some black doctors, if we would accept their services. I positively declined placing myself under their charge, and said I would rather let my disorder take its chance; but the others, who were rather worse than I was, consented.

The native surgeons, therefore, came, and without giving them any previous medicines, in order to remove the cause of their complaint, they administered large quantities of opium, which immediately stopped the flux; but the consequence was that they died in twenty-four hours of mortification of the bowels. The guards made some pariahs, the lowest race of men, drag them out and throw them on the bank of the river, to be devoured by jackals. From what I had seen, I determined to adhere to my resolution, although my disorder gained ground. In the course of the month three others died of the same malady; but the monsoon finished without its effects proving fatal to any more of the prisoners.

January 1st 1783. Notwithstanding our long confinement, and the frequent frustrations of our hopes of release, we began this year in better spirits than the last, having received information that our arms were still successful on the Malabar Coast, and that our troops were marching into the inland country, whilst the Nairs and Polygars, who occupy the mountains and jungles near Seringapatam, thinking this a favourable time to recover their ancient independence, whilst Hyder's whole force was engaged against the English, moved out of their stronghold, destroyed the open country and committed as many acts of barbarity as Hyder's army had done in the Carnatic.

The garrison of Seringapatam was thrown into the greatest consternation, and as few of the Nabob's regular troops were in the place, the killadar sent two battalions against them, composed of Carnatic prisoners who had been embodied, and part of the new Musulmans attached to their corps. These, supported by some regular sepoys, were attacked by the Polygars and totally cut to pieces, together with the unfortunate Europeans, who had expected that they would have been able, with the aid of the insurgents, who were in great part fighting the English cause, to have made their escape.

To our very great satisfaction, we were informed that Mobit Khan was slain on this occasion. Seringapatam become the scene of great alarm on this defeat, it being reported that the Polygars were advancing on the place; but their fears were soon quieted, and our hopes crushed. It appeared that the indefatigable Tippoo Sahib, even in the middle of the monsoon, had left the Carnatic with a strong army, assisted by a body of French, and was in hot pursuit of our troops, who were retreating before him back to the Malabar Coast. The capital resounded with rejoicings, and all said that in a few days Tippoo would compel them to capitulate, as he had Colonel Braithwaite in the year preceding.

February 5th. We this day observed an unusual commotion in the fort, and the inhabitants and sepoys crowding to the durbar, as if something very extraordinary was going forward, whilst at the same time the looks of the guard exhibited the most remarkable astonishment. This appearance was so uncommon, that we endeavoured all in our power to induce the guard to give us an explanation of what had occurred, but without effect, for they said it was as much as their lives were worth if they told us, but that we would soon know.

We, therefore, were obliged to wait patiently, until we could gain the desired intelligence. On the next day, a sepoy, on our solemn promise of secrecy told us that Hyder was dead, and that the killadar and all the great people were in utter consternation. This news gave us the greatest joy, but we were afraid to indulge in it, as we had been so often disappointed by flattering reports, though none had been of so strong a character as this; however, in the afternoon we were certain of its truth, as a body of infantry arrived from Tippoo's army on the Malabar Coast, and, on entering the fort, proclaimed the death of Hyder Ali.

This body of troops Tippoo Sahib, on hearing of his father's demise, immediately sent off under one of his favourite officers, well knowing that it was of the greatest importance to get possession of the capital before the people had recovered from the first alarms. He had reduced the English army on the Malabar Coast to the last extremity, but was under the necessity of abandoning his success, and set off with the greatest expedition to the Carnatic, as he was well aware that, until he secured the allegiance and command of the grand army, his position as successor to the Mysore empire was very precarious. The Rajpoots, who had been so long over us, and whom we had always found most kind and considerate, were sent away and relieved by a guard of Moormen.

We were now happy beyond measure at this great event, and concluded that, as the new Nabob had succeeded to the government of a country which

the protracted war had thrown into embarrassment and confusion, with the probability of the inhabitants secretly plotting to re-establish the family of the deposed rajah, he would conclude peace with the English. Even if this did not take place, we were convinced that Tippoo Sahib, who had during the course of the war established as higher reputation for humanity to his prisoners as for the personal bravery which had endeared him to his troops, would certainly treat us in a more humane manner than we had hitherto experienced, and make the severity of our imprisonment much lighter than his father had done. The hopes that orders would soon come to this effect gave us the highest satisfaction.

February 20th. We were this day informed that Tippoo Sahib had been universally proclaimed by the grand army as Hyder's successor, and that not the smallest disturbance or dissent had been manifested, which had been suspected in some quarters. Tippoo had also publicly declared his determination to prosecute the war against the English.

February 25th. A new killadar arrived this day from the camp, with orders from the nabob to supersede the old one and put him in prison, which was done. We were much concerned at his disgrace, for he had always treated us kindly, and often lamented that the severity of his orders obliged him, against his inclination, to use harsh measures.

The new killadar we found was a man of opposite character. He was Tippoo's greatest favourite, although originally he had been in the low capacity of his cook.

March 4th. Certain intelligence was received that the English army, upon the departure of Tippoo, had again moved out of the post they occupied, and being reinforced by more troops, had retaken the greatest part of the Malabar Coast, and that Izat Sahib, the killadar of Bedanore, afraid of the resentment of Tippoo, who had always been his enemy, had delivered Bedanore, and all the strongholds under his command, into the hands of the British, who, thus entangled from enemies on the coast were advancing towards Seringapatam.

It was also ascertained that the Polygars, who had sometime before retreated back to their fastnesses, had again commenced the plunder of the open country. This news made the people, who are very superstitious, conclude that the Nabob's power, so inauspiciously begun, would be but of a short duration. However we soon afterwards, heard that Tippoo was collecting the greatest part of his army in the Carnatic, and being stung with rage at the loss of so valuable a part of his country, denounced vengeance against the English on the Malabar Coast.

March 190th. About a month before this, I had found that my disorder was gaining on me so fast, that I could with difficulty stand from extreme weakness, and had made repeated attempts to be taken out of irons, but without effect. I however fell upon another expedient to obtain relief, adopting, with rigid perseverance, the most economical mode of living, by which I accumulated 10 fanams; these I offered too the commander of our guard, if he would take me out of irons, and he accepted the bribe. I was overjoyed at my good fortune, but it only lasted a few days, for on his first visit the killadar, seeing my chains removed, abused the guard most severely and ordered them to the instantly replaced, although he was told that I had been taken out of irons by his predecessor. As I was extremely ill, this temporary release was rather hurtful than beneficial, for I was so unfortunate as to have a heavier set of manacles than those I had had put off. This circumstance made us change our ideas as to the relaxation of punishment under the sovereignty of Tippoo.

April 15th. Tippoo Sahib had now arrived, with a very strong army, within six miles of Seringapatam, a considerable body of French troops being among his forces; but the Nabob, to show an example of self denial and discipline to his officers, would not enter the capital, although he had been absent from it for three years. Receiving an addition of guns and stores, he pursued his rout to Bedanore, and even publicly declared that in six weeks he would be master of the place. The sepoys of our guard told us that he was determined never to allow any of his principal prisoners, whom he had captured within the limits of his own country, ever to return to their native land, and that as we were captured in the Carnatic, we would be released as soon as peace was concluded.

April 17th. This day Lieut. Samson, who was attached to Colonel Braithwaite's army, in the Tanjore country, was taken out of our prison, although he was very ill, and, with two other officers who remained in the prison in which Colonel Baillie died, was sent to the fort at Mysore, ten miles distant from the capital. We endeavoured to learn the cause of his removal, and were told by the sepoys that such were the orders of the Nabob, but they did not know the reason. On the same day, Colonel Braithwaite. who had remained a prisoner in Hyder's camp, arrived, and was confined with another officer in a large dark house, in a part where the Nabob always kept his wild beasts.

June 5th. We had now for sometime waited with the greatest anxiety to know what would be the fate of Bedanore, and we had been kept in considerable suspense by conflicting reports of its fate; one day it was taken, on the next the siege was raised, but on the 17th of April, all our hopes were

once more frustrated on hearing a salute, and witnessing the greatest rejoicings. The sanguine expectations we had for months entertained, that great success of our arms would soon produce peace, now vanished, and we sank again into profound despair. We felt the wretchedness of our situation more severely than ever, for Tippoo, as if he had only waited for this last success to show himself in his natural colours, order that our scanty allowance, which was barely sufficient to procure the common necessaries of life, should henceforth be considerably reduced, and that our servants, who had until now been permitted to go to the bazaar and lay out their money, should no longer have that privilege.

In consequence, our little pittance was handed over to the guard to expend for us, and they defrauded us of more than half of it. These were cruel hardships for a set of men who had now been three years incarcerated in a loathsome gaol. I had always struggled to keep up my spirits to this date, but my disorder, which had been preying on my constitution for two years, had now reduced me to a skeleton. I had no hope of preserving my life but by a speedy deliverance, which seemed more distant than ever.

June 20th. This day General Matthews, who had commanded an army on the Malabar Coast was brought in a prisoner to Seringapatam, escorted by a large body of cavalry. He passed our prison in a palanquin in his regimentals, and had all his baggage and servants with him in as high a style as if he were his own master. This respect to the general gave us great satisfaction, as we had imagined that Tippoo would have treated him with greater severity; he was put into a large house in a retired part of the fort, with every thing he had brought with him, but, in a few days after his arrival, the killadar went to his prison, and took away all his baggage, money, servants, even stripping of the clothes he had on his back, and some old ones were given to him in exchange. He was then put in irons, and a measure of bad rice was served to him for his daily subsistence. These transactions, which were communicated to us by some of the sepoys, made us extremely anxious to hear the particulars of his misfortunes from himself, and, by the aid of a bribe given to one of our guard, we wrote to him, and he sent us the following answer:

"Gentlemen, I have just had the pleasure of receiving your note, for which I have long been anxious. I was a Brigadier General upon the Malabar Coast, which I conquered in a very short space of time; but having weakened my army, by garrisoning a great number of forts that had been taken, and not having received the smallest support from the Bombay presidency, I was obliged with the remainder to shut myself up in Bedanore. From want of intelligence, Tippoo appeared before the place before I could make the necessary arrangements for its defence. It is an old fort, with a bad wall and no ditch.

However, I held out for three weeks, and then made a capitulation with him, to be sent with my garrison on parole to Bombay. This agreement he shamefully broke. I am extremely concerned at your miserable situation; had I known of it before, I would never have become a prisoner. In my present circumstances, I must entreat no further correspondence. Tippoo has now gone to the sea side to besiege Mangalore, which is a good fort, it has an excellent garrison, and I hope will be able to hold out. Should anything happen to affect my life, I request you will let my executors know that the Company owe me forty thousand rupees, which I advanced for the use of the army on the Malabar Coast." The following was added as a postscript:- "The principal officers of my army were picked out from the rest, and sent to a fort called Cavilderry."

July 4th. Our minds were now fully engrossed with the fate of Mangalore, and, from the various accounts of the sepoys, we had reason to think that Tippoo found it a more difficult undertaking than he expected. Seringapatam was now thrown into the greatest consternation by the ravages of another British army, which had penetrated into the country from the direction of Trichinoploy, and as their was no enemy of any consequence to resist them, they had reduced most of the southern parts of the Nabob's country. The inhabitants of the capital were even apprehensive that they would make an attempt on the place where Tippoo was so fully occupied with Mangalore. This idea even made the sepoys of our guard change their conduct towards us, and as long as this fear lasted, they were extremely kind.

September 9th. Ever since the capture of General Mathews and his army, we had entertained the most desponding thoughts, as Tippoo had now every reason to expect that he would regain the entire possession of his own country on the Malabar Coast, and be able to return with redoubled vigour into the Carnatic; but some people at the garrison, who had always shown us attention, when they could do it unseen, had informed our servants that our deliverance was near at hand, as the Nabob would soon receive an unexpected blow.

This information, though coming from our friends, gave us but little doubtful satisfaction, as we had been deceived so often before, that we had long since ceased to pay any attention to reports about Tippoo. On this occasion, however, our credulity was soon weakened, as, from the door of our gaol, we perceived vast multitudes of people running about with drawn swords, and numbers of prisoners, while the countenances of our guard exhibited signs of terror and confusion.

We remained in the greatest suspense till the next Monday, when we were told in confidence by one of the guard, who had shown himself our friend, that a deep conspiracy had been formed by most of the principal; Gentoos in

the fort, to seize the present opportunity, when few regular troops were in garrison, to surprise the place and restore the old Gentoo government. To accomplish this resolution, the conspirators had engaged a large body of Polygars, who inhabited the neighbouring hills, to be in readiness to march to the capital with the greatest expedition; and while one part of the conspirators were putting to death the principal Mahomedans and seizing the Nabob's family, another was to let loose the numerous body of prisoners confined in the various gaols, on whose support they naturally reposed the most complete reliance.

This bold undertaking had been maturing with the greatest secrecy for more than a month, and not the least apprehensions of failure were entertained till a few hours before the intended explosion, when one of the conspirators, either impelled by his fears or the hope of a large reward, went to the killadar and revealed the whole plot.

At that moment, the chiefs of the insurrection were in consultation in one of their houses, to which place the traitor directed the killadar, who, repairing thither with a strong guard, secured them with ease, then ordering the whole of the garrison under arms, he placed a double guard over the rajah's palace, as well as over the different prisons.

In the morning the killadar, sensible of his weak position, and in order to strike terror into the malcontents, put eight of the principal conspirators to death, which was done by dragging them at the feet of elephants three times round the wall of the fort, and an equal number of times before the doors of the different prisons.

The killadar, however, remained in the greatest consternation; he immediately despatched information to Tippoo; but as the English army, which had moved out from Trichinopoly district, had subdued the whole of the adjacent country, and were now advancing without molestation, he was in the greatest apprehension would fall into their hands before he could receive a reinforcement from the Malabar Coast, Tippoo being twice as distant from Seringapatam as the English.

September 20th. Ever since the discovery of the conspiracy, we had been treated in a much kinder manner than we had ever experienced before, and many little indulgences were granted to us, to which we had hitherto been strangers; all of which kindnesses we justly attributed to the alarm which an English army, so near the capital, inspired. We indulged the hope of soon hearing of the arrival of the British troops, and in reality expected to be masters of the very place we so cordially abhorred; but salutes and rejoicings of every kind soon extinguished these expectations.

A large reinforcement of cavalry and infantry were marching into the town, despatched by Tippoo from the Malabar Coast, upon hearing of the late events. Positive orders from the Nabob to put to death every person in the smallest degree suspected of having engaged in the conspiracy were implicitly carried into execution, and likewise to double the guards over the prisoners, so that we were not only daily spectators of the tortures inflicted on number of miserable wretches before the door of our gaol, but experienced the hardest usage on all occasions from our guard, and were defrauded out of much of our daily pittance.

My constitution had now become so very weak and languid, from the long continuation of my disorder, that I had long viewed every event that had befallen, or might befall, us with perfect indifference, from the entire conviction that I could never hope to enjoy the blessings of freedom; and I would with transport have laid down my life, could I have taken complete revenge on those who had caused me such complicated misery.

October 9th. We had now been wishing for some time to hear from General Mathews, and had collected a trifle amongst us to send to him, knowing the cruel treatment he experienced; but we were this day told by some of the guard, with the greatest coolness, that as there had been such great disturbances in the place, the Nabob declared that he would never be perfectly at ease while such a great officer was in it; and that, some days before, poison had been mixed with his provisions, of which he died that very morning.

This awful intelligence filled us with horror. As we had always contrived to keep up a secret correspondence with the privates confined in the fort, we received further particulars from them of this frightful catastrophe. They sent us word that one of them, who had learned the Moorish language, had been frequently sent for by the killadar to act as interpreter. The killadar had received a message from the general, written on a tile, and the interpreter was desired to explain its meaning. He told the killadar that the general had written to say, that he had every reason to believe that poison had been given to him with his rice, and requested to know whether it had been by the Nabob's orders that he was thus cruelly to be deprived of his life.

When the soldier had given this interpretation, the killadar abused him in the grossest terms, and ordered him to be flogged for misinterpreting the writing, and sent him back to prison. This information corroborated what we had heard from the sepoys, and placed the matter beyond all doubt; but we could only lament, without avenging, the atrocious fate of this unfortunate man. We thought that a similar destiny might be reserved for us, and this suspicion struck us with more force, as Tippoo Sahib, during his fathers life time, had on various occasions taken considerable pains to express his regret

at the hardness of our lot, with hints that he had done everything in his power with Hyder to alleviate our sufferings.

The real meaning of these professions being now explained, by the barbarous murder of General Mathews, we could not help acknowledging the truth of what many persons in Hyder's service had, on various occasions, told us respecting the character of that prince. They represented Hyder Ali as a brave and generous man, often cruel from necessity, but never from choice; and that with regard to ourselves, he had given the most positive orders, that we were to be treated with every respect and kindness, but guarded in such a way as would totally preclude us from carrying on any correspondence with his enemies, who were numerous, and active in hostility to his government.

The idea of releasing officers on parole, or attaching them by kindness, never entered into his conceptions; and as he had risen from the station of a private horsemen through his bravery and generous qualities to the rank of general of the Mysore army, and afterwards by treachery and murder usurped the Mysore government, he could only hope to maintain his power by a vigilant and severe administration.

As a soldier, he was respected throughout Hindustan, and in his own army he was as much beloved as feared by all his officers, many of whom he had raised from the lowest condition on his personal knowledge of their individual merits. This spirit of justice inspired his whole army with emulation and zeal in his service, everyone knowing that if his punishments were tremendous to those who incurred his displeasure, his bounty was munificent to those who served him faithfully.

The character of Tippoo was not generally known in Hyder's army, but those who were best acquainted with him said that he was the best Mussulman in the Mysore empire. Little did we at that time understand the full force and extent of this eulogium. Hyder, though himself illiterate, had entrusted the education of his son to some fakirs about his court; a class of men who, though possessed of little learning, yet, by every species of mortification and self-denial, had acquired the reputation of being true Mussulmans. Under the care of these instructors and the eye of his father, Tippoo became an expert soldier, and in the management of the horse, the bow, the lance, and the musket, he shone pre-eminent. Though inured to war from his infancy, he was reputed a good poet; but he was known among his intimates to be cruel, and education had implanted in his mind, as the grand and predominant duty, the blinded zeal and the most furious devotion to the Mahomedan religion. He was a bigot and fanatic of the most gloomy and remorseless character; and as he had cunningly masked his real sentiments during the life

of his father, and was respected in the army as an excellent and indefatigable soldier, and an attentive observer of the duties imposed by his religion, his accession to the supreme command took place without any commotions or intrigues, so usual in the military governments of India. He had the wisdom to allow most of Hyder's principal officers to retain their stations, although, as it afterwards appeared, he had marked out many for disgrace or death, for he was known to have said that he would purge the army of mongrel Mussulmans. His ambition was boundless, and he avowed his determination to establish his empire over all Hindustan by the Koran and the sword.

Soon after the death of his father, the conduct of Tippoo exhibited itself in strict accordance with his genuine feelings and sentiments, and we were frequently told by our guards that we should shortly be made happy by being received into the bosom of the true believers. Thus the death of Hyder seemed but the prelude to new misfortunes; the murder of General Mathews had opened our eyes to the true character of Tippoo, and from that hour several of us daily expected to meet a similar fate.

December 1st, 1783. A considerable part of our guard was this day relieved, and a Moorman of rank and dignified manners took the command. The dismissed soldiers, who had behaved well to us, on taking their leave, recommended us to be extremely cautious, and avoid all correspondence with any of the other prisoners; and advised us, if we had any papers of consequence in our possession, to destroy them or bury them.

We all felt that this advice was dictated by the sincerest feelings of friendship, and that in future it behoved us to be very circumspect in our conduct. A general destruction of all loose documents, and of every thing that might raise suspicion of corresponding with the other prisoners, now took place, and in the evening, when we were ordered to muster, our new commandant desired the guard to search throughout the prison to discover if we had concealed any papers; not finding any, he advised us to be very cautious in not carrying on any correspondence.

A few days after this event, one of the sepoys of the guard informed one of our fellow prisoners that, as he had been in the English service, and had had the best of treatment, he would reveal to him a secret regarding the captured officers of Mathews army, who had been sent to Copal Droog. He said that these prisoners, consisting of a major, the commissary general of the army, and sixteen captains, immediately on their arrival at that place had been put into irons, and their allowance for provisions was the same as our own, but that in other respects, their treatment was much harder; that on the preceding day, he (the sepoy) had belonged to a guard sent from another garrison to relieve the one that was over these prisoners; that on the second

day after the arrival of the new guard, the commandant put himself at the head of most of the troops in the palace, and repaired to the prison, attended by some persons who held in their hands bowls containing a green liquid, that the prisoners were ordered to advance two by two, when the commandant informed them that it was the Nabob's orders they should drink the liquid; that the astonished prisoners refused compliance, and requested leave to consult with one another, which was allowed; after a pause, they said that they had not committed any crime against Tippoo Sultan, they feared it was his intention to take their lives, and declared that they would not drink the contents of the bowls.

The commandant informed them at once that the liquid was poison, and that it would cause an easy death, but that if they persisted in rejecting it, he had the Nabob's orders to throw them alive down the precipice of Copal Droog. He declared that he was strictly bound to execute these commands, and again recommended the drink, and gave them one hour to determine which mode of death they would adopt.

When the time had expired, they stepped forward to the commandant, and told him that they were ready to drink the poison, but they did not doubt but that the day would arrive when Tippoo would meet his just reward of his inhumane cruelty, so wantonly exercised on a set of unfortunate and defenceless men. They then swallowed the poison, which operated with rapid violence on some, and in one hour the bodies of all the prisoners were extended lifeless before the commandant.

After this appalling tragedy, there was no further occasion for a great force in Copal Droog, in consequence of which our informant, with some others, had been set to reinforce the guard over us. He then took from his waist two papers, which he said he had taken off the dead officers, and which appeared to have been written by Captain Richardson, of the Bombay establishment, who was one of the sufferers on this dreadful occasion.

In a few days after we received this communication from the friendly sepoy, we heard the same account from various quarters, but with little deviation. It would be impossible to describe the sensation it left on our minds; for when it is considered that many of us had been prisoners between three and four years, and that, cruel and miserable as our treatment had been we cheered up our spirits with the hope of some day arriving at the term of our sufferings, the horrible fate of our murdered comrades threw the deepest, saddest gloom over the countenances of even the most sanguine; and the wretched uncertainty as to the period our lives might be spared, with the conviction that sooner or later we should meet a cruel death, made many of us really wish for a speedy termination of our miseries.

We learned that Tippoo, after the surrender of General Mathews at Bedanor, had once more reduced nearly the whole of the Malabar Coast, the English only retaining in Canara the three forts of Mangalore, Onore and Carwa. The Nabob conducted the siege in person, and as the flower of his army were employed on this service, and the place had been besieged for seven weeks, it created surprise at Seringapatam that it still held out; and as a formidable English army, commanded by Colonel Fullarton, had reduced the whole province of Coimbatore, and was actually advancing towards Seringapatam, Tippoo had no alternative but to raise the siege of Mangalore, or push it with redoubled energy.

The very powerful army he had before this fortress induced him to think that the garrison would not persevere in a protracted resistance, and he felt his pride and honour as a general deeply at stake in the success of this enterprise. We heard from good authority that Mangalore was strongly defended, and commanded by a very gallant and able officer, Major Campbell, who declared that, while he had one day's provisions or a round of ammunition, he would not surrender to a man who had so infamously broken his capitulation with General Mathews, and afterwards in cold blood murdered him.

Many of the guards, while they revealed to us these particulars, informed us that Tippoo only waited for the reduction of Mangalore to turn his arms against the English in other quarters, and that it was his determination to wrest the whole of our possessions from us. They could not, however, refrain from expressing their admiration of the noble defence of Mangalore, and said that Tippoo had actually lost the good opinion of his officers and men in various assaults; they also told us that, during the siege, Tippoo had given repeated orders to put the remainder of his prisoners to death, and had again countermanded them when the tide of success seemed turning in a direction adverse to his views.

In the unparalleled defence of Mangalore, he was taught to reflect that the issue of the war might prove disastrous to him than he had ever contemplated. It was also announced to us, at this period, that commissioners had actually arrived in the Sultan's camp with proposals for peace, which his bad success at Mangalore would probably incline him to listen to; but as our ill usage was not mitigated, we placed but little confidence in this communication. It was, indeed, the general opinion that the Sultan would order us to be put to death through resentment at his failure, or from some other capricious motive, either prompted by his natural cruelty or his abhorrence of Christians.

About this time, we were informed that Captain Rumley, Lieut. Samson, and another officer, had been put to death in the fort of Mysore, by an order from Tippoo, and that Captain Rumley, after his two companions had drunk the poison tendered to them, stepped forward to the guard, and wrestling the sword of the commandant from him, killed him and two of his attendants on the spot, when the others cut the gallant officer to pieces. We were at a loss to conceive why Tippoo should have selected these three unfortunate men for his vengeance at this period, but it recalled to our remembrance that they had been sent to this retired place some months before the tragedy was performed, and that their murder had been resolved upon when they were removed.

We now thought our own hour of torture would soon arrive, and many began to contemplate the anticipated event with gloomy indifference , while others, feeling the deepest indignation at such unparallel barbarity, determined to sell their lives in the same manner as the intrepid Rumley had done.

At this period, some of the officers having hinted that they had found a plan to escape out of the prison and scale the walls of the fort, in the hope of gaining the neighbouring hills, a general alarm for the consequences pervaded the gaol, and opinions being taken on the feasibility and expediency of the plan, it was resolved that the endeavours of any one to escape would be considered cowardly and infamous, as it would expose all who did not succeed to certain death; and that if it was our fate to perish by the orders of the unprincipled barbarian in whose power we were, we would not commit any act that could afford him even a colourable justification to the world.

I am, however, of opinion, that no person in our gaol had any serious idea of looking to his ornately at the expense of his unfortunate colleagues, and it may be truly affirmed that, though the cruel treatment we had experienced, and the extraordinary length of our confinement, had soured the tempers of many and despair was depicted on every countenance, a general sentiment of friendship and regard was mutually felt among the inmates of our prison.

Our guard had for some time been strictly enjoined not to carry on the least conversation with us, and they obeyed their instructions with gloomy severity. Two Brahmins accompanied by a Moorman of rank, came to the door of our prison, and called out my name and that of two other officers and desired us to come forward. We of course obeyed, when the Brahmins said they had orders to take us out of prison, and conduct us to the governor. I immediately declared that, having been confined in this dungeon upwards of three years and a half, in heavy irons, with my body reduced to a perfect skeleton by long sickness, I was resolved not to separate myself from my fellow prisoners, and that if I was to suffer death, it should be in the same spot where I had experienced such misery.

They declared there was no intention of using us ill, and that in accompanying them I should be made happy by great and important news. Still I resolutely refused to leave the prison; on which the Moorman,who had hitherto remained silent, said, with a smile;

"You have suffered enough, I am come to impart joy to you all; the merciful Nabob, my master, Tippoo Sultan, has restored peace to the world; the English nation and he are now friends, you are to be immediately taken out of irons, and tomorrow you are to leave Seringapatam, and march to your own country. I see Sir", he continued addressing me "you are alarmed; you were sent for to receive a sum of money and a letter from your friends; you shall receive both, after which I dare say you will no longer refuse to leave your prison."

The letter and the money were brought and delivered, and came from a friend of mine in the army, who took the earliest opportunity of administering to my necessities. The letter stated that Tippoo, being unable to reduce the fortress at Mangalore, and having lost the flower of his army before the place, and also finding the English had reinforced themselves in other quarters, and were advancing into his country, had at last declared that he would listen to the proposals of peace; that commissioners had been sent to him, and after many difficulties, a pacification had been concluded, it being stipulated that each of the belligerents was to retain what he possessed before the war, and that all prisoners should be released.

This letter instantly removed all doubts, and the sudden transition from misery to liberty, at so unexpected an event, was felt by all of us with the most heartfelt sensations of joy, and even our guards seemed to partake of our happiness. Soon after we had received this information, the governor appeared, accompanied by a number of blacksmiths, who, in about two hours, emancipated our limbs from the cumbrous load of iron that had been our constant companion for so many years.

To the Editor of the *Asiatic Journal*
May 1818

Sir, The following specimen of Tippoo Sultan's poetical capacities will perhaps amuse some persons, but as the writer was once a despotic monarch, swaying, with all the energy of bitterness and bigotry, a fearful influence against the British, it may instruct others to contemplate His Majesty listening to the music of his opinion of himself.

The following extracts from Kirkpatricks's *Letters of Tippoo Sultan*, are verses of encomiastic odes called Raikhtehs, or Bhat, supposed to be the composition of the Sultan, which were set to music, and sung or recited at appropriate seasons and hours of the day; the language of the original is a

mixture of Persian and Hindi: here a verse of one, there a verse of another. Four intelligent children with good voices were, by special edict of the Sultan, to be procured, and taught to sing them on public occasions at the palace.

"When the Rustum-hearted king rushed forward (or charged) on the Ruksh of his anger, then did the hearts of the lions of Europe (the English) quake with dread.

The flash of his sabre struck the army of Baillie like lightening; it caused Munro to shed tears, resembling the drops distilled from spring clouds. On Lang's heart was fixed a stain, like that of the tulip; Coote was made by this calamity to lament like a hyacinth."

There follows hear an illusion to General Mathews, who is distinctly named, the nature of which I do not comprehend.

Bussy and Lally are also mentioned, but I am too doubtful regarding the sense of the passage, in which they are introduced to offer a translation of it.

"When the Mahrattas behold this army of our king, the dread thereof causes them to fly like deer; the Fringy (Europeans) and Nizam ul Mulk pass day and night together, trembling with fear of our king.

The kingdom flourishes and the army increases daily through thy munificence and justice....

When mankind behold the liberality and munificence of our king, they exclaim, with one accord, Hatim was an absolute miser in comparison with him."

But perhaps none of the fights with which this extraordinary performance abounds are equal in extravagance to the following, with which I will close these extracts:

"Owing to the justice of this king, the deer of the forest make their pillow of the lion and tiger, and their mattress of the leopard and the panther."

These odes were ninety-six in number, and the style is extremely unpolished, the above mentioned work was sent to the killadar of Putun (Seringapatam), on the subject of getting the four children instructed to sing them, and desiring copies of the collection to be made from the set transmitted with the letter. Another copy to be given to Uzeemuddeen, the Taaluhdar (or Superintendant) of the dancers there (i.e. at Seringapatam), in order that the latter may teach the same to the said dancers.

[Tippoo Sultan died on 4 May, 1799]

Asiatic Journal, September–December 1842

Chapter Seven

Conquest of the Province of Cuttack by British troops

Sir,—As no well connected account of the conquest of the province of Cuttack by the British troops has ever appeared before the public, that I can recollect, I transmit the enclosed.

Yours &c.

Amicus

Nov. 22, 1817.

The conquest of the province of Cuttack in 1803, in addition to our colonial possessions in the East Indies, was an event of some importance, inasmuch as it connected the territory under the supreme government in Bengal with that under the presidency of Fort St. George, exclusive of other advantages in point of revenue and commerce.

A recital of some of the operations that occurred in that part of the Mahratta war by the British troops, under the command of the late Major General (then Lieut. Col) Harcourt, may be interesting to your readers, together with some general account of that most interesting province; I have therefore been induced to arrange a few memoranda upon that subject, for which much allowance must be made at this time, thirteen years having elapsed since the events occurred, consequently during so long a period much has been forgotten; but I shall endeavour to acquit myself under such circumstances, as far as a well disposed inclination will admit of. The length of the province, extending in a N.E. direction from Ganjam to Jellasore, is about three hundred miles, and from the sea coast at Point Palmyras west to the Birmull Gaut, or Pass, is about two hundred miles.

The aspect of the country upon the sea coast and to the westward of it for about twenty miles, is low, covered with wood, totally inundated from the sea at spring tides; into this extent of swamp and forest the numerous rivers that have their sources at very considerable distances, among the woods, hills

and mountains to the westward, discharge their streams, in many channels, similar to the deltas of the Ganges and Burramputer [Bramaputra] rivers at the bottom of the Bay of Bengal, but on a much smaller scale.

At a distance of about twenty miles from the sea coast the country rises considerably, with fertile, dry, healthy soil; and at about twenty miles more to the westward the country is elevated into hills, mostly covered with thick forest, abounding in valuable wood for building, some yielding resin, and various valuable woods, highly eligible for the purpose of the cabinet-maker and for dying. The wood produced on the sea coast is principally the Soondry, from which wood-oil is extracted, and the Janool.

Under the ancient Hindoo government this province was generally governed by the Rajah of Pooree [Puri] or Jagannath, much divided under various subordinate tributary chieftains. At the period when Muhammedanism was introduced into Hindostan, one of the Mussulman leaders, well known by the designation of Callapar, invaded Cuttack; a desperate battle was fought between his followers and the Rajah's army, who was defeated and fled with the idol into the woods and wilds to the westward, but not until the idol had received considerable marks of their fury: but it subsequently was brought back to the temple, terms being adjusted at this time with the Mussulman government at Cuttack.

I have been informed the Mahrattas expelled the Mussulman government about 1738, in whose possession the city and province of Cuttack continued until 1803.

In August 1803, an arrangement for attacking the province was made under the presidency of fort St. George, and for this purpose a part of the northern division of the army under that presidency was ordered to be in readiness to proceed on that expedition from Ganjam.

A detachment, consisting of two companies of his Majesty's 22nd regt. And a part of the 20th Bengal Native Infantry. Together with some artillery and civilians, joined from Bengal by sea, amounting altogether to about four hundred an fifty Europeans and two thousand Native Infantry, with six field pieces and one iron heavy twelve-pounder. This force moved about the 10th of Sept. 1803, from Pidghy, Ganjam, upon the narrow sandy space, about a mile wide, enclosed by the sea on their right hand and the Chilka Lake on the left, to Manickapatam, where the latter communicates with the sea, in a channel about a mile wide; attended by a fleet upon the lake of about one hundred boats, that they had equipped at Rhumba to transport some of the military stores, with provisions, fuel, &c.

It was at Manickapatam that the first opposition was expected, but the Mahratta officer in charge of this frontier retired without making any

opposition. This very important occurrence enabled the detachment, not only to cross the Manickapatam river unopposed, but also to proceed and take possession of the town and temple of Jagannath, the sacred will of the idol having been first ascertained by the officiating high priest, by sending an infant into the temple, through whose innocent mind he was pleased to communicate his determination to place himself under the protection of the British government.

[Jagannath is an epithet of Vishnu, compounded of the Sanskrit words Jagat, the world, and Nath, Lord: Lord of the World].

This event happened about the 18th Sept. when the weather, which had hitherto been fair, soon changed, and became tempestuous and wet, with torrents of rain.

At this place were landed, with great difficulty and exertion some battering ordinance and stores from Bengal; but to move them was impracticable for want of cattle, and the only piece of ordnance to be used in reducing the forts and city of Cuttack was the iron twelve-pounder before mentioned.

The bullocks being small, fifty of them carefully yoked could hardly move it. The usual artillery yokes and tackle sent from Bengal were so large for these animals, that in training them they jumped through the yokes; and by very respectable authority the government was informed, such was the difficulty in equipping the detachment with draught and carriage bullocks, that they were, comparatively with the animals of similar kind in Bengal, not bigger than rabbits.

The temple [of Jagannath] containing the idol is an ill formed mass of decayed granite, about four hundred feet high, situated not far from the sea, at the S.W. extremity of the town; a most unhealthy dirty place, principally inhabited by an ill looking, sickly population, chiefly Brahmins, with others attached to the various departments dependent upon the idol.

The detachment marched from Jagannath on the 24th of Sept. about three o'clock in the morning, the weather cloudy, threatening a tempest, which commenced about sun-rise, with thunder, lightening, and a deluge of rain. The tract pursued by the troops (for road there was none) was over a soft, loamy soil, intersected by numerous ravines and rivulets, generally fordable, or nearly dry, but the rain soon swelled them to a great depth.

Upon their banks the Mahratta forces took post, and disputed the passage all the way to Ahmedpore, a distance of about fourteen miles. The officer in command of the advance greatly distinguished himself that day for his judgement in directing the operations in crossing those torrents, and the passage of the whole of them was effected, after some delay, with little loss;

but at the intended ground of encampment it was necessary to dislodge the Mahratta army, who had got possession of it. Since the rain commenced falling, it was the only well raised, dry spot of sufficient extent to receive the camp.

After a contest, the Mahratta forces were compelled to relinquish it, but from the inclemency of the weather the camp equipage and stores, and ordinance, did not all come up for two days, when the storm abated, and not without considerable damage to the ammunition and grain.

After the encamping ground was in possession of the officer commanding the advance, and the usual posts established for guarding the camp, which was surrounded by a good deal of wood, the troops not on duty took refuge under such shelter as could be obtained from trees and other cover, and the tempest raged with great violence the whole of the succeeding night and day. But dreadful to relate, on relieving the sentries, many could not be found, and the unaccountable cause was not ascertained until day light on the following morning, when many of their mangled bodies were discovered in the skirts of the adjoining woods, partly devoured by leopards, with which this part of the country was greatly infested.

The raging of the elements prevented their cries or any resistance they might have made being heard, and the darkness of the night favoured the couching of these voracious beasts, who must have sprung upon and seized their prey without being previously seen.

The detachment was not prepared to move from Ahmedpore until the 1st Oct. the path lay through a country very much inundated, and the next encampment was taken up about eight miles in advance on the road leading to Cuttack, and was the only dry spot of ground that could be discovered of adequate extent for the purpose.

It was soon ascertained that the damage to the grain and ammunition stores, arising from the inclemency of the weather, and against which no precaution could provide, was considerable; but situated in a country highly cultivated and well inhabited, supplies of provisions were obtained from it in abundance, the peasantry exhibiting a most satisfactory degree of confidence reposed in the British troops and their commander amidst the horrors of warfare.

But to remedy the loss of ammunition was not so easily effected, notwithstanding all the books in the detachment were estimated, how far they would contributed in the article of paper, to replace the damaged musket ammunition.

The Mahratta army having taken up a position about five miles distant on the road to Cuttack, an unsuccessful night attempt was made to surprise them; but the intelligence proving incorrect, the anxious commander, after wandering about the whole night with a large proportion of the force under his command, returned to camp about daylight in the morning without finding one enemy, and all who were out that night will long remember the many deep sloughs and inundated rice fields that were waded through on that dark excursion.

However, about the 3rd of Oct. after crossing about five miles of country mostly covered with water, the Mahrattas were at length discovered, and they approached to meet the advanced guard sent out to explore the country for another dry spot to encamp on. They came forward on on both flanks of our small force with infantry and cavalry, and maintained a contest for several hours, and then retired, having sustained some loss.

Ours was not great, certainly not so much as might have been expected from the numbers of the enemy, reported to be at least ten thousand horse and foot; but their principal force was reported very much to exceed this amount, and with some artillery were encamped in a strong position near Muckundpoor, about five miles further on the road towards Cuttack, in which about one thousand men from the detachment completely surprised them the following night, and notwithstanding the loss was not great on either side, the confusion and alarm created in the Mahratta army was prodigious, and they did not halt or collect again until they reached Cuttack, distant about twenty-five miles.

The weather now cleared up, and the detachment advanced into a higher and dryer country and took possession of the town of Peeply. It was here the Rajah of Jagannath, whose fortress lay distant about fifteen miles to the westward, proposed to make common cause against the Mahrattas, dividing the spoil; but the commander returned no answer further than assurances that no enmity was intended, and that if he, as a tributary chief to the Mahratta government, did not act against the British forces, no injury would be offered to him.

But with this he did not appear satisfied, expecting at least a good slice of the country contiguous to Peeply, including a part of the space through which the Dawk road lay; but no further communication took place for the present, and the detachment advanced to Cuttack, and encamped about the 12th Oct. on the south bank of the Cutjoory (a branch of the Mahanuddy river), about one mile wide, fortunately for the detachment at this time easily fordable.

No time was lost in crossing the river, with the intention of attacking the Lolbaug fort on the opposite bank, which was found to be abandoned by the enemy, and a reconnaissance was immediately made upon the Banobatty fort, distance about a mile and a half, situated upon the south bank of the main branch of the Mahanuddy river.

The enemy were actively employed in burning all cover in the vicinity of the fortress, but their endeavours were unavailing, for their governor had inconsiderately permitted a very substantial stone and mud wall to be erected within fifty yards of the margin of the ditch, which was found to be of considerable width, from thirty to one hundred and thirty feet, twenty feet deep, and full of water, in which an ancient stock of alligators had increased a numerous progeny from distant periods.

The fort was of a rectangular form, containing an area of about eighty acres, enclosed with double stone walls of various dimensions, and a large square cavalier in the centre, considerably elevated, to command the adjoining country. Where the ditch was narrow the walls were very high, the exterior not less than twenty-five feet, and the interior some as high as fifty.

The garrison was reported to consist of about two thousand men, mostly Arabs and Sikhs, and they had about twenty pieces of ordnance of various description mounted on the walls. The only avenue leading into the fort was through three gateways, well built, and defended with numerous picturesque stone battlements; a solid stone causeway was here laid across the ditch leading to the outer gate, which the enemy were actively employed in breaking up, and with the stone building up the outer gate, leaving for ingress and egress only a very small wicket; and in the work they had so far advanced, that no time was to be lost in interrupting them.

A party of the garrison mounted guard outside the fort gateway and bridge to cover the party working upon it. The artillery was brought to open upon the fort the ensuing morning at daylight, under cover of some buildings and batteries hastily constructed. Their fire soon compelled the guard at the gateway to retire into the fort, and the working party to abandon their object of closing it; but they had covered a very strong pair of doors with large masses of stone to the height of ten feet, leaving a wicket open six feet raised from the ground, to which a plank was placed for ascent and descent, which could at any time be drawn inside the wicket and the door closed.

Where the walls were not formidable, the ditch was sixty feet wide, so that the greatest difficulty was to cross the ditch—to fill it up was impracticable; the commander of the detachment therefore determined to attempt the gateway by forcing the wicket, a storming party of about one thousand men being ordered upon this service, with a six pounder. After

some discharges, the fastening to the door gave way and it opened , upon which an officer and some men advanced to the wicket, ascending the plank, when a contest took place, in which the sergeants' long pikes were found to be of critical importance, in reaching the enemy placed on each side within, defending the entrance with their sabres.

The storming party succeeded , and entered singly through the wicket; fortunately, as they advanced to the second gate, a gun placed for its defence missed fire, when the party rushed forward, and finding the third gate open penetrated into the body of the place, in which a severe conflict lasted for about two hours, with much carnage, as few prisoners were taken.

Many of the garrison fled in all directions, swimming across the ditch, and joined a body of horse about five miles distant, commanded by Ballajee Konjur, the Mahratta provincial commander-in-chief, who had very wisely removed the government treasure from the fort and placed it on elephants, to be ready for a speedy flight whenever the fort might fall. this officer had in former times been opposed to British troops, and from experience then obtained, saved the treasure. The force under his command was reported to amount to about one thousand five hundred horse and foot, about two hundred of the former well mounted and armed.

To obtain this treasure now became a very interesting object, and all the force that could be spared and equipped was sent in pursuit with as little delay as possible; and although great exertions were made, and some of the exhausted elephants fell into the possession of the pursuing detachment, the treasure escaped, and the Mahrattas, after ascending the brimful Gaut at the western confines of the province, fled with it to Nagpoor.

The detachment took post at the bottom of the Gaut for about three weeks, and were after that time severely afflicted with the forest ague; of about eleven hundred men which that force consisted of, about five hundred very soon died, the remainder in a very debilitated state were with difficulty removed to Cuttack, where both Europeans and natives were sadly debilitated for many months.

Thus terminated the operations for the reduction of the capital and the S.W. part of the province. Doubtless the rainy season and inundated state of the country prevented the Mahratta horse from being as active as might have been expected, and the province altogether was contemptible.

About the end of September, a force was sent from Bengal to attack the northern part of the province. At the town and factory of Ballasore, situated in a flat country, the river is deep but narrow, its banks marshy, and at the mouth the bar is shallow, but passable at spring tides for vessels drawing about fourteen feet.

The troops and stores were conveyed in vessels to within about four miles of the town, when they landed and marched to the fort and factory, which they got entire possession of after a long contest, but with little loss. A battalion of native infantry and a detachment from the governor-general's body guard marched from Jellasore, and soon joined at Ballasore. And continued their route to Cuttack, and then entire possession was obtained of all that part of the province under the immediate government of the Mahrattas.

But extensive tracts remained to be settled, appertaining to the tributary Rajahs, who professed submission but tendered no tribute; and the Rajah of Jagannath continued to assert his claim to some districts situated between the city of Cuttack and Jagannath, and endeavoured to obtain possession by force; upon being resisted, his troops laid waste all the adjoining country with fire and sword.

The trouble and confusion continued under the most patient forbearance on the part of the British government, with endeavours to settle the Rajah's expectation in an amicable manner, until November 1804, when the horrid cruelties perpetrated by the Rajah's officers on some prisoners taken in action with his troops, by mutilating our native soldiers, which, added to the outrage of destroying and depopulating an extensive tract of fine country, compelled the British government to send an adequate force for the reduction of his power, which was found to be considerable, and in connection with all the other tributary chieftains in the province.

The Mahrattas having been expelled, it soon became necessary to take some measures regarding the universal Hindoo pilgrimage resorting to Jagannath. The liberal and benevolent policy of the British government was the cause of a proclamation being issued, that the taxes and fines hitherto levied upon all descriptions of pilgrims, at numerous barriers established for that purpose by the Mahratta government, should be totally done away, and all Hindoos had full and free permission to approach the object of their religious veneration at all times and seasons without any restraint whatever.

When this notice became promulgated and generally understood over the extended regions inhabited by Hindoos in various parts of India, they lost no time in endeavouring to benefit by it, and the multitudes that entered the province for that purpose, particularly as the festival of the Rutjatra approached, were immense.

The first consequence thereof was experienced in a scarcity of food, which was severely felt over the whole province. The parts that suffered most were the towns and villages on the high road, to whom application was made for grain. Not being able to supply the demand, the importunity from very numerous famishing crowds soon became intolerable, added to the nuisance

created by so many Hindoos performing the usual ablution after performing the calls of nature, spoiled all the water, and compelled the inhabitants to fly, pursued by voracious multitudes: the former obscured themselves in the woods, but the improvident pilgrims suffered severely, and the attention of government was soon excited to prevent the recurrence of so dreadful a disaster.

In this measure originated the necessity of levying a sufficient import upon all and every pilgrim proceeding to Jagannath, to defray that expense necessarily incurred to provide for their sustenance, and the maintenance of good order among them; for it never could be supposed that a Christian government would spontaneously contribute towards the encouragement of a barbarous superstition among its subjects, any further than the feelings of humanity might dictate: and I apprehend this is the branch of revenue upon which the proprietors of East-India stock have received congratulations, from a well meant but mistaken zeal, in late very respectable character, who happened to visit Jagannath soon after this assessment upon the pilgrims was established.

The extreme veneration of the Oreah Hindoo natives, together with all of that cast generally, for the religious character and person of the Rajah, rendered it a matter of some doubt in what manner to proceed on account of his unwarrantable and cruel proceedings, for although he was an infant, and the acts of his government were those of his ministers and officers, it was all done in his name.

The Mahratta being a Hindoo government, they never hesitated at any time to adopt much the same policy towards this Rajah (as Bonaparte did to his holiness the Pope) seizing upon his temporal property in levying by force a heavy annual tribute, and realising from the temple the greatest possible pecuniary fines from the pilgrims, amounting altogether to a very considerable sum annually.

The independent chieftains generally omitted to pay any tribute until called for, and generally withheld it until they had been worsted in battle, with the probable prospect of the loss of all their lands; then and then only were they induced to pay: and this was not unsatisfactory to the Mahratta local government in Cuttack, as it afforded an excuse to the Rajah of Berar, their immediate sovereign, for maintaining at a great expense a large military force; it encouraged military adventurers from all parts of India to seek for service in the province, serving with any party that would pay them most, and this led to the granting of lands, particularly to a colony of Sikhs, for military service.

The Mahrattas had built a stone fort at Sarrunghur, about four miles to the S. W. of Cuttack, upon the skirts of the Jagannath Rajah's woods, to

check the depredations committed by his subjects in that part of the country; but the situation was ill chosen, and being in many respects incomplete, it had never been occupied by the British troops: but now it was thought advisable to establish a force in it sufficient to prevent an enemy taking possession, as well as to support any operations that might be adopted in that direction towards Koordah, the ancient name of the strong hold and residence of the Rajah.

A force of not much less than seven thousand men, infantry and cavalry, regular and irregular, with a proportion of artillery, moved in various directions to attack the Rajah's army, very strongly posted in Koordahgur, and garrisoned as reported by not less than twenty thousand men, of which some were mercenaries and foreigners, mostly foot, with a 'small body of horse, but they were mostly composed of the Orea inhabitants, an athletic, hardy race, and if well attached, not deficient in resolution and personal bravery, using the matchlock gun, sword and spear.

Koordahgur, the residence of the Rajah, is situated about twenty miles S.W. of Cuttack; (but the extent of country under the immediate management of the Rajah is considerable: particularly among the woods and hilly country to the west, the limits probably have never been accurately ascertained). It is enclosed by a belt of impervious forest, perhaps to the depth of many miles, carefully trained to grow into a close mass of the most thorny thickets. The only avenues to the interior were through defiles strongly fortified: the principal entrance was from the eastward, communicating with the road leading to the town of Peeply, and this was carefully strengthened; there were two other accessible entrances into this strong hold, one from the N.W. and the other from the west.

To distract the attention of the enemy, it was thought advisable to make three separate attacks, the principal to be directed on the N.W. and west, which being little exposed to notice, and not so much frequented from the wild countries still more to the westward, were not so much strengthened, and the mass of forest was not so deep.

The route persued by the troops was along the south bank of the Mahanuddy river, a country beautifully picturesque with hill and dale, the views on the river uncommonly fine.

The enemy sometimes appeared in ambush, and their attack was more alarming than disastrous. In one part of the river they had mounted some small guns on a high bank commanding the navigation, and cutting off the trade with Cuttack; the guns were soon removed, and the party fled.

The three attacks on the entrance into the wood were by agreement simultaneous, and all succeeded, after experiencing much resistance in penetrating through the depth of forest; but it terminated by opening into a beautiful vale of an oval form, about three miles long by two in width, the whole cultivated with a fine crop of rice nearly ready for reaping. It contained also a fine mango grove, and a neat village; but the Rajah resided upon a hill at the south end of the vale, the approach to which was strongly stockaded and fortified with several barriers and a well constructed stone wall enclosing a part of the summit of the hill, in which the Rajah and his family had very long resided with his principal officers and domestics.

When the different columns of attack met in the vale, the encampment occupied a large part, and the Rajah's troops retired to the barriers at the foot of the hill fortress, some parties remaining without, who attempted to re-occupy the fortified entrance into the wood that had been forced and partly demolished, thereby attempting to enclose and cut off all communication with the force encamped within.

A few alerts from our troops in the night soon disconcerted this plan of operations on the part of the enemy, and artillery being placed to command all the avenues leading to the hill fort, the range of the numerous garrison, reported to be about twenty thousand men, became much circumscribed. A deficiency of provision and other causes soon occasioned the multitude to disperse, for which they took opportunities in the night, until the number might be reduced to a garrison of about a thousand men.

After three weeks' operations, ascertaining the real strength of the works, which it was extremely difficult to discover, as no native could be induced to describe them, and from their complicated and irregular form, when partly described, were not easily intelligible.

A large space was enclosed at the bottom of the hill with a ditch and rampart, very much covered by plantations of bamboo, the whole extent of which was occupied by parties using matchlocks and jingal guns, having an open clear space of about two hundred yards extent around it; from this barrier, parties issued in the night close up to the batteries.

To discover the nature of the works upon the hill was impracticable until the outer barrier was forced; therefore, after some cannonading, the commander resolved to storm it in two places. The officer commanding the principal force very gallantly leading, received a jingal shot that struck and destroyed his gorget, and another that passed through his hat, with out being much hurt.

After a short conflict the troops penetrated, pursuing the Rajah's soldiers, who retired rapidly to the interior stockades, of which there were several, constructed on the slope of the hill, which was very steep. In forcing these works, the principal storming party was much exposed to a very heavy fire from works on the side of the hill, but it was ill directed, till at length they gained the foot of the stone wall and gateway, leading into the body of the place on the summit of the hill.

With great zeal and exertion, a heavy iron twelve-pounder was drawn up to the gate, with the intention of forcing it, but a projecting stone wall entirely covered it, and a great disappointment to this project; ladders were applied, but at this juncture the other party, that had been conducted by an unfrequented tract to a place where the stone wall terminated in an unfinished manner on a precipitous part of the hill, met with little opposition, and at this place climbed up with great difficulty upon the top of the wall into the body of the palace, and immediately proceeded to the gateway, from whence they drove the enemy and let the principal force in, when the whole proceeded to the Rajah's dwelling, from which he had recently fled with the garrison, through a gateway on the south side of the hill.

The troops being much exhausted, were not able to pursue for more than a few miles, and thus terminated the capture of Koordahgur; but such was the adherence of the natives to the Rajah's family, that to settle the country while he was at large was found impracticable.

Several very active and well concerted projects to capture him and disperse the remainder of his adherents, though executed by very able and enterprising officers, did not succeed; but he became alarmed at a proclamation issued for his apprehension, and at length opened a communication with an officer confidentially employed (proposing to surrender upon terms), who was dispatched without delay, and after a very arduous excursion into a remote and wild part of the country, received into his custody Muckund Deo, the young Rajah, then eighteen years of age, and conveyed him to camp, upon terms highly beneficial to his real interest and happiness, and quite satisfactory to the British government, who now found no difficulty in tranquillising the whole province.

[Note: the inhabitants in the adjacent country as he passed came out and prostrated themselves on the ground in the most humble act of adoration, which added to the alarm and apprehension expressed by his relatives and adherents, rendered this service a matter requiring considerable management; and before the Rajah would consent, much soothing conciliation was required.]

One chieftain who possessed the inundated unhealthy country on the sea-coast, near to Point Palmyras, the rajah of Kunka, had worsted the Mahratta generals upon all attempts to subdue him; they having embarked troops and

guns in large unyielding flat-bottomed boats, almost unmanageable, in the vicinity of the sea, and in the mouths of the larger streams, their expeditions usually terminated in surrender to the Rajah's lighter vessels, that were narrow and very long, rowing one hundred oars, with their sides well barricaded to cover his men. They expertly and quickly moved round the Mahratta boats in all directions, moving out of the way of fire of their guns, and killing their men with their matchlocks, until the whole were captured and barbarously carried into slavery; but few of their prisoners lived long, from the extremely unhealthy nature of the climate, in which only those could live who were born in it.

The Mahrattas' dread of this chieftain and his country was very great. The gun-brigs sent from Calcutta could navigate but few of these streams, and the Oreas were very expert in stockading the streams and throwing up cover, from which they could be enfiladed. The channels leading to the Rajah's strong hold were much obstructed, situated in one of the most unhealthy salt marshes that can be conceived.

A well concerted enterprise captured some of the rajah's boats, and then our troops proceeding in them, soon made their way to Kunkagur, when the chief came out and surrendered.

Thus terminated the principal operations of the British troops in subduing this fine province, in March 1805; it was soon after this period put entirely under the authority of the civil power.

The city of Cuttack was computed at that time [between 1803–05] to contain one hundred thousand inhabitants. It is situated between two branches of the Mahanuddy river, that diverge about three miles to the westward of the city, and in the rainy season nearly insulate it.

In February and part of March, the most dense mists were very frequent in the morning, continuing until near noon, followed by clear and serene evenings and nights; hot winds prevail in April, May, and June, and then the summer heats are very oppressive, and severely felt in tents and temporary habitations; but the nights are mostly cool, and this hot season is frequently refreshed by tremendous storms of thunder, lightning, and rain.

Upon the whole, it was considered as a preferable climate for an European constitution, to the more humid atmosphere of Bengal, and certainly the aspect of many part of the province much more interesting, the waters abounding with a great variety of sea and river fish, the champaign country [similar to the region in France], hills and wilds with many varieties of game, including many of the most ferocious animals and serpents.

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Chapter Eight

Sketches of the Goomsur Campaign

In consequence of a requisition made to Head-quarters by the Brigadier commanding the northern portion of the Madras army, in the year 1835, for a reinforcement of troops to aid in quelling an insurrection which had broken out in the Goomsur country, in Orixa [Orissa], a force, considered adequate for the purpose, assembled at Askah, an insignificant native town, irregularly fortified, lying on the confines of the Madras Presidency, and, previous to the war, the most advanced post held by the Company's troops in this part of the country, and at that period garrisoned by one company native infantry.

The 49th, 8th with detachments of the 3rd, 10th and 21st regiments of native infantry, first took the field, and communicated a piece of intelligence which, in some measure, tended to damp their ardour to advance; that, owing to the encroachments of the jungle over the face of the country, fever of the most formidable character prevailed; and that several officers and men had been constrained to quit the field, and retire into cantonments at this early period of the operations. There was, however, no time for desponding, orders directing the movement of the troops being shortly issued.

In our campaigns in the East, it is customary to cast as much mystery as possible upon the plan of operations, a policy highly inconvenient if carried too far, inasmuch as it may lead to great embarrassment in the sequel; at the same time, to promulgate such intelligence, that might be conveyed to the foe, would be equally injudicious. The medium course is the best, of confiding to all officers the motives which regulate the movements they may participate in, otherwise, if the commanding officer of a regiment or detachment be the sole depository of instructions from head-quarters, and should he fall ere the objects of the expedition are accomplished, the officer who succeeds must be at a loss in what manner to proceed.

From this system of concealment being adhered to with singular pertinacity, not only in the height of the war, but even when troops were concentrating at Askah, it was impossible, when divisions, regiments, and detachments were dispersed on separate services, to collect what each had to perform.

One body, however, in considerable force, moved in a northerly line through the country upon fortified positions held by the enemy. Another, less numerous, diverged from this line and marched upon Sooradah, where they were established, prepared to act when it was deemed expedient to strengthen them by the addition of a piece of ordnance and a party of seebundies or irregular troops. In crossing the country to Sooradah, the party of artillery met with what at first appeared to be an insuperable obstacle to their progress; several acres of high grass, through which their route lay, had taken fire, and threatened to explode their ammunition.

After some delay in seeking a fresh road, at length Sooradah was reached. The country traversed was situated under a range of mountains; and at no great distance parallel to the line of march flowed a branch of the river, which, running past Askah, falls into the sea at Ganjam. The town of Sooradah is erected on the right bank of the river; it is environed by thick jungle, and shut in northward and westward by a range of lofty mountains.

While we leave the party at Sooradah, waiting for the approach of night, under cover of which it had been ordered to effect a passage into Goomsur country, it may be as well to give a brief account of the circumstances out of which the war took its rise.

Some years back, the Rajah of Goomsur, named Dhunnajee Bhunj, wrested the sceptre of this principality from his aged father, who, in order to escape further cruelties, took refuge within the sacred walls of the pagoda at Juggernauth. Dhunnajee Bhunj subsequently rendered himself obnoxious to our Government, and incurring its displeasure for some political offence, was confined at Chingleput, in the neighbourhood of Madras.

In process of time, his contrition being sufficiently manifest, and the punishment he had undergone being considered adequate to his offence, the Company, with its usual clemency, suffered him to resume the reins of government of the Zemindary of Goomsur, in which position he continued to afford satisfaction for a time.

He began at length to exhibit symptoms of a desire to embroil himself in another dispute with our government, and ultimately, after repeatedly evading the payment of his tribute, openly declared his independence. After frequent remonstrances on the part of the civil authority employed in the Northern

Circars, without avail, in the middle of the year 1835, an armed party entered Goomsur to enforce the collectors demand, and exact reparation for the insult offered to our Government.

No opposition of any consequence was manifested to the progress of the detachment, until they reached a place where it was reported Dhunnajee Bhunj was to be found; the reception met with here corroborated the suspicion that having involved himself afresh with the Company, the zemindar had determined to draw the sword and throw away the scabbard, sensible that his offence was much aggravated by his ingratitude for past leniency. The troops were fired on, and eventually returned without accomplishing any thing of importance. It was now proclaimed that the rajah was in open rebellion, and he was given to understand

'Thy lands and goods are by the laws confiscate Unto the state'.

Active measures were resolved upon, and troops ordered to assemble, preparatory to an invasion of the seminary and the pursuit of the refractory prince.

The character of Dhunnajee Bhunj was drawn in dark colours; he was represented as the most profligate prince that ever disgraced a throne, plunged in sensuality, and 'steeping his senses in forgetfulness' by the agency of opium, to the use of which he had always been addicted.

His cruelty was notorious. In the zenana, his son, a boy of ten years of age, had been instructed, by some evil-disposed persons, to take the opportunity of telling his father that, when he attained manhood, he was determined to behave to him as he had done to his father; in other words to depose him.

This menace, from being constantly repeated, at the instigation of the authors of the suggestion, so wrought upon Dhunnajee Bhunj's cruel disposition, that, without considering the youth's tender age, and how unlikely it was that the threat should have suggested itself to the boy's mind, immured him alive in a recess excavated in one side of the palace. This was a current story in camp; but let us hope it was only a rumour, illustrative of the prince's cruel disposition.

So much as transpired respecting the plan of future operations in Goomsur must be comprehended in the subjoined statement. The object was to endeavour to detach the ryots or farmers from their allegiance to the chieftains of districts confederated with the zemindar, who, along with him, had been proscribed by Government, offering protection to those who returned in tranquillity to their villages, and to lay waste, by fire and sword, the disaffected districts.

To attain this object, it was found necessary to establish military posts from one end of the country to the other, from whence detachments might radiate, when employed on dours, in pursuit of insurgents; by frequently crossing each other, in the course of these enterprises, and environing the rebels, our troops made the escape of the latter next to hopeless. The positions of the wolsas, or strongholds, were indicated by such of the countrymen as we succeeded winning over to us, and generally found amidst the thickest jungle, in the bed of a sequestered ravine, or on the activity of a hill of difficult access, affording excellent lurking places to a foe: the smoke from fires employed in culinary purposes, in many instances, betrayed these retreats from the vigilance of our seebundies and spies.

To return, now, to the party we left, whose progress, for a time, we propose to follow. At twelve o'clock one night, they quitted Sooradah, and move along a narrow pathway, which led through the jungle to the valley of Gotchah [a village]. The cold was most severe that night, every cloak in the detachment was in requisition, and the dew falling most copiously, and lodging in its descent upon the leaves and boughs of the trees and underwood, through which the party forced a way, in the course of a few minutes after the departure, a dry jacket was not to be found in the ranks. Silence was strictly enjoined on the line of march.

For many miles, the utmost order prevailed; the only sound which, ever and anon, disturbed the silence of the night was occasioned by the officers horses, led by the native horse keepers, in the rear of the detachment, stumbling over a stone or piece of wood lying on the road. The tread of the men might be said to have been muffled, so noiseless was it, the soft soil, saturated with the nightly dews, returning no answer to the footstep. A conjecture as to the nature of the country could hardly be indulged, owing to the closeness of the jungle and the darkness of the night, though dim objects, occasionally protruded between the observers eye and the stars he might be gazing at, indicated mountains at no great distance.

The earliest blush of morning was beginning to tinge the face of heaven, when a sudden commotion was heard in the ranks. On halting to ascertain the cause, it was discovered that one half of the detachment had diverged from the route, and were embarrassed in the thickets of the jungle. To recall the stragglers a bugle was sounded, which, giving echo tongue from hill to hill, aroused the entire population of the district to the contiguity of danger. Daylight called life back from its temporary lethargy, and filled the woods with the early call of birds. The character of the country was now easily discerned, hills clothed in jungle rose on either hand.

A bamboo jungle being traversed, at length Gotchah appeared. It was an insignificant village in a hollow in the hills, not more than three hundred yards from side to side. On emerging from the woods into the hollow, that had been cleared of wood for agricultural purposes, a single glance sufficed to show the troops that no enemy opposed their progress across the midan. A stockade, however, was observed under a hill on the farther side; to cut off any fugitives, a party of seebundies were thrown out on the flanks, previous to an advance to the attack.

In the sequel, however, these precautions proved to be superfluous; the stockade was found deserted. Hereupon a council of war was called, and it was resolved to advance into the adjoining valley of Rogheda, another stockaded position of the enemy. This place was likewise empty; the garrison had but recently decamped; their half consumed breakfasts were scattered about in the houses within the stockade. Fire was set to all the buildings, including the defences, and the troops were countermarched upon Gotchah, where a small party had been left in reserve.

On their way back, a few desultory shots were heard in that direction; the rebels had taken advantage of the dispersion of the party to attack the smaller part of it, upon whom they had opened fire under cover of the jungle, which they maintained until the party, now reinforced by the return of the rest, stormed the hills at different points, and dispersed them, destroying several wolsas into the bargain.

The main object of the movement into this part of the country, which was the capture of a noted rebel chief, called Hutty Ram, conjectured to have been in one of the stockades, having failed, it was resolved, on account of the Gotchah valley being too confined to answer as the site of an encampment, to pitch the tents at Dobadee, in the neighbourhood; a plan which was forthwith carried into execution.

The party, whose fortunes we have followed into this dour, remained in this position for some time, during which they were much straitened for supplies of all kinds; on many occasions, the officers being forced to run the risk of being cut off by parties of the enemy prowling in the adjacent jungle, by going out to shoot wood-pigeons, and anything else they could find, for their meals. Rice, it is true, was plentiful; but although natives may contrive to subsist on it, and a little mulligatawny, the English in India, find their dinners unpalatable, as well as unsubstantial, without some kind of flesh.

The sebundies, or irregular troops, attached to our army, were a fine, athletic race of men, whose chief care seemed to be centred in dress; they used to embellish their persons with hats composed of wicker-work,

surmounted with feathers from the pea-fowl's train; 'points' were suspended to almost every part of their outward man, consisting of threads of various colours, to the ends of which were suspended little balls of painted wood. Matchlocks, tulwars or swords, with handles so confined as to defy the grasp of an European (the case throughout the east), bows and arrows, and spears, composed their armouries.

Their dress assimilated to that of Rajputs of India; white or yellow tunics, fitting closely upon the frame, and cloths wound around their waists, with one end passing between the legs, and tying in the waist-band in front.

The stockades in that part of the country, although quite original in plan, might yet be found extremely formidable in the hands of a brave garrison. The contour is generally embraced in a square, from the sides of which project what may be termed irregular bastions, affording a flanking fire. The walls are simply composed of piles driven into the ground, by twos together, a space subsisting between each pair sufficient to allow the muzzle of a matchlock to protrude, or the point of a spear; the defenders of the stockade are thus enabled to fight behind the cover of the two piles, which in breadth together average the size of a man's body. In the interior of the stockade, watch houses are elevated on four poles, to about the same height of the wooden walls.

The Dobadee Moota, a synonym for district, from the dours, constantly made day and night, to dislodge the enemy from their strongholds, and destroy their wolsas, was at length completely subjugated, and most of the inhabitants were brought back to reason and their homes. By a similar procedure, before long, the whole of the southern districts of Goomsur were in the hands of the British. The head-quarters were then established at Nowgaum, the camp being pitched in a grove of mango trees. Vishnuchutram, Goomsur, Codundah, Caliumbra, Burraburasingay, and Dobadee, were regarded as the most conspicuous outposts.

The country of Goomsur lies at the foot of a range of lofty mountains, preserving a nearly north and south course. In the productions most beneficial to man, the country is by no means rich, although there is no death of vegetation. From the summit of the mountains, a view embraces the picture of a country studded with hills, the whole expanse being enveloped in a dark green mantle of jungle, except where a few patches of lighter green indicate the rice fields.

To the almost impenetrable nature of these parts, the constant troubles that have distracted the country may be ascribed, because the natives, conceiving themselves secure against retributive justice, act in consonance with the dictates of their own wishes, not hesitating to depose one zemindar

and elevate another as the fancy may seize them. During the three or four years which preceded the war, moreover, a degree of animosity had been widely diffusing itself in these wild lands against our government.

First, the standard of disaffection was unfurled by the Coles, a tribe of savages remarkably backward in the arts of civilised life; the same insurrection was promoted by the Kimedians, who subsequently participated in it; and in the sequel the Goomsur rajah was induced to lend himself to this attempt to cast off the odious interference of the English Government in the polity of the states of Orixa [Orissa].

In the course of these campaigns, executions were frequent; the stoutest nerves would flinch from the revolting sights that constantly obtruded themselves. Hardly could a person move a few hundred yards from camp, in search of game, without encountering the spectacle of a putrefying corpse hanging upon the arm of a tree. In many instances, so carelessly performed were these executions, that the bodies were to be seen suspended but a few feet from the ground, the lower extremities being eaten off in consequence by wolves, hyenas, jackals and other denizens of the forest.

Several officers sitting on the general court martial assembled at Nowgaum, to try insurgents taken in arms, could not teach their consciences to concur in the sentence of death pronounced upon the miserable objects brought before them. With some show of reason, they thought it hard to condemn men to death for adhering to the commands of the chieftains they had been trained to obey from their youth.

In most cases, however, the sentence of death was commuted to transportation, where the condemned manifested contrition; unless, a very mischievous character, he had been convicted of aiding and abetting in the murders and atrocities perpetrated on such of his countrymen as had evinced a disposition to accept the Company's overtures, and place themselves under our protection.

Having availed themselves of this amnesty, amongst others a woman and her daughter returning to their home in a village contiguous to the fort of Goomsur. The night succeeding their arrival, their house was surrounded by a party of Dundassies. Dragging the females out, these miscreants abused them, and, inflicting several wounds, left them for dead, the younger with her arm cut off.

Under the care, however, of our surgeons, these poor creatures were sufficiently restored to health to be chiefly instrumental in convicting some of the party, at whose hands they had thus been outraged. The cruelties committed

on such of the female camp-followers as fell into the hands of these ruffians are too frightful to relate.

At no great distance from the camp of Nowgaum lies the fortress of Goomsur. Its defences are comprised in an earthen rampart, thickly planted with bamboos, their pointed branches projecting so as to oppose any attempt at escalade; indeed, nothing but a heavy fire from artillery would make the place practicable. In addition, there is a deep broad ditch, defended by water, weeds, and alligators; across it a causeway conducts to the gateway of the palace; a gun at this gate, with a small party of matchlock-men, would render the approach most difficult.

The palaces in the interior, once in the occupation of Dhunnajee Bhunj, were subsequently appropriated as places of confinement for the insurgents captured during the war. The pagodas, which likewise contributed to choke up the *terre pleine* of the place, were suffered to remain in the possession of the priests, who continued to exercise their offices with surprising indifference to the change in the politics of their country.

Nearly opposite this place, and on the road to Nowgaum, is Nuttingay, a village conspicuous by the walls of its pagoda being covered with the most obscene paintings which a depraved imagination could invent. From these pictures, some opinion could be formed of the nature of the orgies which the rajah was accustomed to observe, in honour of Kali, to whom the building is consecrated.

Travelling, upon one occasion, the rajah had occasion to halt where resided the daughter of a native gold-smith, the fame of whose beauty had spread far and wide. The zemindar by chance observed her unveiled charms as she was in the act of filling her pitchers at the well of the village. Unable to restrain his passion, and setting all laws at defiance, he required the surrender of the maiden by her parents. A show of consent was made, and it was intimated to the rajah that his wishes would be complied with, on condition of the interview taking place in the goldsmith's own house, at night, on purpose to avoid the shame which would descend upon the family if the intrigue transpired.

True to the appointment, he made his appearance after dark, and was ceremoniously ushered into the most sequestered part of the goldsmith's dwelling, and there left to await the lady's arrival. Not long was he kept in suspense; in the course of a few minutes, his meditations on the approaching happiness were put to flight by the advent of four stout young men armed with cudgels, who commenced, without a prologue, to beat the rajah in a most unmerciful manner, concluding with kicking him out of doors.

Ere the exasperated zemindar could return with his myrmidons to wreak his vengeance on the authors of the trick, the family had taken flight, carrying along with them the whole of their effects, having the previous evening laid their plans with so much care, as not even to leave the rajah a bare wall to exhaust his rage upon.

While the force was lying inactive under canvas, a brigade at Nowgaum, another encamped on a plain near the fort of Goomsur, the officers occasionally amused themselves with exploring the adjoining forests in search of game. Named after Mr. Russell, our diplomatist, a gentleman of the most active disposition, who frequently participated in the fatigues and dangers appertaining to the dours, the cantonment of Rųssell Khondah now stand on a spot in those days the favourite resort of the sportsman. The rock or Khondah was a famous place for bear shooting. Quail, partridge, a few pelican, spur and jungle fowl, with a wood pigeon of a new species, were found amidst the rice stubble on both sides of the camp. Jackals were very numerous, and in the absence of foxes, afforded good sport.

Of the country beyond the western mountains of Goomsur, nothing seemed to be known at the time these notes were taken, and hence a wide scope was afforded for conjecture.

Some thought an extensive desert extended in one direction to the river Mahanuddy, and in another reached the confines of the Nagpore district. By Mr. Hamilton, the country between Goomsur and that state is designated Gundwana, and on the charts is marked 'unknown tracts.' It had long been conjectured that the inhabitants of the hilly districts in India, who are known under the separate names of Colleries, Coles, Ghoands, Bheels, and Khonds, are the remnants of the aborigines who, vanquished by the ancestors of the present Hindu family, when they first set foot in the country, were compelled to fly to the fastnesses for shelter.

Previous to the advance of the army from the camps at Nowgaum and Goomsur, many strange stories were current respecting the inhabitants of the terraced lands above the ghaut. By some, the Khonds were represented men more savage than 'the cannibals that each other eat'; others maintained that they were formed like dwarf inhabitants of the Western Ghauts, reputed to live in trees and subsist on the mountain tortoise and wild fruits, holding no communication with the people of Malabar farther than trading with them at a very long arms length, by depositing, on a spot of neutral ground, the cardamums and other products of the hills, which the inhabitants of the coast replace by such commodities as they know the wild men desire in exchange; indeed, almost everyone had a separate tale to tell about our foes.

It was the fortune of the writer of these sketches to be commanded to join the detachment upon which devolved the duty of pioneering a way through the close jungly country of Goomsur, with a view of establishing a post on the high lands beyond. The necessity of using every effort to cultivate amicable relations with the tribes we were expected to come into contact with, and of persuading them to surrender into our hands the rebel chiefs of Goomsur who, on the commencement of hostilities, had fled to them for shelter, was emphatically inculcated previously to our departure, but in case this course of procedure should fail, we were to surprise each village in turn, capture the inhabitants, and examine their numbers, in order to secure the rebels on whose heads by Government high rewards had been set.

On a certain evening in the month of February, 1836, the order book was brought round the tents by the orderly Havildar, and from it we gathered that, at 12 o'clock the same night, the camp would be broken up, and the detachment pursue its best way in the direction of the Ghaut mountains. Without interruption, throughout the night, we marched in single file, along a footpath in the jungle, which grew so thickly that our lascars had to lead, and lop off the branches.

Daylight discovered us on the margin of a profound ravine, excavated by mountain torrents ages ago, and yearly increasing in dimensions. Halting here, we speedily found the enemy had detected our movement, notwithstanding it had been accomplished under cover of night; our position was enfiladed by them from behind trees and rocks, and under the shelter of the banks of the tributaries to the ravine.

During the time allotted for breakfast, a desultory fire was maintained between our foes and the skirmishers thrown out to force them to preserve a respectful distance. When we moved on in the same order, fighting our way through the low country in possession of the matchlock men of the rajah of Goomsur, who headed the rebellion. However, as my object is not to relate the adventures of a dour, I must omit many events of it, and at once introduce the reader to a mountain pass in the range of eminences separating lower Goomsur from the highlands of Khondistan; one hand of it resting on the margin of a mountain torrent, the other abutting upon a high wall of rock: in other words, a sheep path along a scarp of an eminence that formed one wall of a vast fissure in the side of the mountain.

Here we spent the night, fully conscious that, if day broke on our precarious position, the natives would have great advantage over us, possessing, as they did, the ability of hurling huge rocks from above, and perhaps tumbling us along with them into the chasm beneath.

The preceding evening, we had been constrained to destroy by fire much of our camp equipage, and slay the camels that carried it, in consequence of their utter inability to traverse these rough pathways; and only actual exhaustion could have compelled us to bivouac in this position during the night.

Before daybreak we were again advancing; the enemy; in defiance of the silence we observed, contrived to get a hint of our presence, and, although that the eleventh hour, assailed us with stones from the summit of the rock. It cost no small measure of care, and the exercise of some adroitness, to avoid extermination from the huge masses that were showered down. The sepoys had necessarily to march in open file, in order that a wider scope might be had wherein to perform their individual evolutions, and to recoil from the danger that menaced them.

The Bloodthirsty Khonds

At length, debouching from the pass, the attention of all was riveted to a sight I can never cease to remember. The path we had been following abruptly open upon a dell, its *terre-pleine* laid out in rice fields. At the farther end of the hollow, there was a green mound, of some size, over which a large banyan tree waved its branches; beneath it were seated men who, in their general aspect, resembled the Indians of North America. They were the Khond chiefs, assembled in council, and habited in the war garments of the tribe, their heads decorated with the feathers of the wild pea-fowl; with bows and arrows, and battle-axes in their hands. They had evidently been expecting our advent from the pass.

As the leading men of the detachment emerged, a shout arose from every side, above from the mountain ridges enclosing the valley, below from the ravine, and from the woods surrounding the dell; the bushes close to me seemed to teem with savages in startling contiguity. On a sudden, the cries ceased; on every ridge appeared long lines of armed men, who added to their imposing aspect by adroitly turning the polished blades of their battle-axes simultaneously to meet the rays of the rising sun, which, like the streams of lightening, flashed along as they lighted upon them.

On the edge of the dell we halted; as yet no manifestations of hostility had been made by either party farther than I have already related; indeed, I apprehend all such notions had subsided on both sides, and yielded to mutual admiration; for I cannot doubt, their sensations, at first beholding disciplined troops led by famed white men, partook of our own on first seeing, instead of the hideous mountaineers we had been taught to expect, a race of

remarkably fine-looking men, bearing a singularly striking resemblance to the Indians of the far west.

There was not, however, much delay; the officer commanding our party, with an escort of sepoys, a besoy or interpreter, quitting our ranks, advanced towards the council tree, and, halting half-way, waved a white flag, to indicate his wish for a conference.

Upon this the chiefs dismissed their council, and created more astonishment on our part by performing a war dance, not unlike that portrayed by Catlin, as belonging to the Maridan Indians. This concluded, another yell arose from every bush and brake, and a voice was heard to exclaim,

'They would hold no terms with us; they knew our object was to annexe their country to our possessions, and they would afford us no pretext for our doing so, by embarrassing themselves in negotiations'.

They added, they would suffer us to return unmolested to the low country; but that all attempts to advance would be resisted. As we were not thus to be intimidated, demonstrations for an advance into the dell were made by our main body; this was the signal for the discharge of a shower of arrows, and execrations at the commanding officers party in the hollow, which was thus constrained to counter march and rejoin us.

All hopes of trying pacific conclusions without foes having subsided, it became necessary to have recourse to hostile measures. A smart fire was, therefore opened upon them from the howitzer and small arms, and in the course of a few minutes not a Khond dared show himself.

After encountering some slight interruption of our progress, in the shape of felled trees and an occasional flight of arrows and stones from unseen hands, rescuing some women and children destined to become victims for a sacrifice, burning half a dozen villages, and so forth, at length we reached the summit of the mountain; and where we had expected to behold a desert waste of land, were rejoiced beyond measure to discover a smiling country, laid out in patches of cultivation, and ornamented by the hand of nature with low hills covered with trees, which, viewed from a distance were not unlike the plantations of young firs so often seen in Old England.

Finding we had overcome all obstacles, and were resolved to gain our point at any cost, the Khonds before long began to change their note, and evince a disposition to come to terms, in order to save their villages and crops on the table land.

We had advanced but a short distance across the plain, in the direction of a ghurry, or mud fort, called Oodaghurry, which we had been ordered to

capture, and which was pointed out to us on the horizon by the guides, when two Khonds ran out of the neighbouring village, holding sticks horizontally in their mouths, like the bit of a horse, symbolical of their submission, and prostrated themselves in front of us, sued for peace. Their overtures were accepted, and by the next morning our camp was pitched near the fort, and we were hand in glove with our recent foes, who now brought into camp supplies of sheep, fowls, eggs and rice. Leisure was now left for me to take some notes of these people.

The Khonds are a remarkably fine race of men, having countenances marked with a highly intelligent expression, and indicative of good humour and gaiety of disposition. Far from participating in the clumsiness of figure characteristic of their neighbours below the Ghauts, they are of light build, with limbs well turned, and made for agility. Of a darker hue than the Goomsurians, their skins are sleek and glossy. The dress worn by the Khonds contributes in a great measure to their striking appearance.

A piece of coloured cloth is wound round the loins, the two ends fastened in a knot opposite the small of the back, and suspended behind as low as the bend of the knee. Around the head they wear a single fold of cloth, which is likewise fastened behind, and its ends are allowed to hang half way down the back. Of great length, their hair, after being parted behind, is brought round on both sides to meet over the forehead, where it is fastened in a bow, and ornamented with a large brass pin, inserted obliquely, or surmounted with a feather from the tail of a gorgeous peacock or cock of the jungle.

All go armed, even to the boys, who may be seen flourishing their battle-axes or practising archery. A Khond suffers nothing to induce him to relinquish the possession of his weapons; sooner would he yield his life. Tobacco, which they more coveted more than anything we had to offer, was rejected when in exchange an axe was demanded; unacquainted with money, they spurned it.

Amongst them are certain men educated to perform the war dance, who, when engaged in their vocation, with a view of terrifying the enemies of the tribe, adopt an altered costume, which, however, in my judgement, does not give an accession of fierceness to their appearance. Casting off the scanty clothing that comprises their usual dress, these men envelope their frames in a thick quilted mantle of coloured stuff, closing to the shape, and maintained so by the agency of a white cord wound tightly round the body and legs. They then arm themselves with javelins, in addition to other weapons.

Loud shouts, raised as soon as our tents became visible, with an accompaniment upon drums, horns, and cymbals, that made the welkin ring,

usually announced the approached of a Khond tribe coming to seek our friendship, or menace us with extermination.

The first their object, when they arrived within a few yards of our encampment, they performed their war-dance, which concluded with a flourish of music; the leading ranks, striking the pointed handles of their axes in the ground, seated themselves behind this standing row of arms, and regarded with anxious looks the advance of their chiefs towards the tents of the white men. The distrust and timidity that at first possessed the leaders, at finding that they had surrendered themselves to the custody of the invaders of their country, were sufficiently obvious; these feelings, however, shortly subsided before kind looks and words, and presents of red cloth, which they valued almost as much as tobacco.

Their confidence thus restored, they freely indulged their curiosity. To persuade them they had not beings superior to man to deal with, I well remember, was a matter of some difficulty; a looking glass elicited, more than any other article, their surprise; they handled it with the greatest apprehension, looking it, as it were, through, and searching behind to find the faces they saw reflected, not recognising for their own.

A sight as entertaining as ever I witnessed was that of one tribe of these mountaineers aiding us in a foray against another, inhabiting beyond a river which, flowing nearly north and south, forms a natural boundary between them. On first discerning our advance, the inhabitants of the village we proceeded against decamped, without making any show of resistance, or giving themselves time to drive away their cattle.

This office we commissioned our allies to do for them, with the recommendation that they should make a slight deviation in the destination of the herd from that their owners would have wished. Probably, having practised a similar manoeuvre on many a former occasion, they betrayed no hesitation nor want of strategy. In the course of a few minutes, a herd of upwards of a hundred oxen was to be seen, at a prodigious pace, rushing across the plain, urged in their progress by no more than three Khonds, who, at great speed, their head and body clothes streaming behind them, contrived to direct the movements of this vast herd with amazing facility.

Did one of the drove manifest any disposition to swerve from the line, he was at once acquainted with his error by one of the drivers, who, dashing forwards, inflicted a slight blow on the animal's head, that reduced him to obedience; if the beast had so far quitted the moving mass as to preclude the driver from reaching him before he had actually broken away, then the axe was seen to leave the mans hand, fly like lightening through the air, and

alighting on the side of the neck or head of the ox, recall him to his position beside the rest of the herd. In this manner the plain was crossed in an incredibly short time, the moving host of cattle disappearing rapidly, until their line of flight was to be recognised by a distant cloud of sand alone.

I do not think that I once observed a deformed man amidst the Khonds; many were rendered hideously ugly by deep scars remaining where the hand of an enemy had dealt a wound with his axe; others had lost an eye in conflicts with their hereditary enemies beyond the 'nullah' whose skill with the bow was equal to their own.

Human Sacrifice

Most repugnant to all feelings of humanity is a custom which the Khonds persist in adhering to, notwithstanding the remonstrances of our government and its endeavours to persuade them to relinquish it. I allude to the cruel practice of immolating women, girls, or boys, annually, in the spring, at the time of seed sowing. The unfortunate victims are usually captured from the people with whom the tribe is waging war, or, in failure of this source of supply, purchased or kidnapped from the contiguous districts.

On the day of the sacrifice, the unhappy creature selected to enact the most conspicuous part in this frightful rite is conducted to a stake from his place of confinement, where, for some months past, he or she has been literally 'fattened' for the fatal day. To it he is bound by iron chains, while certain incantations are being pronounced over him by a priest. Before these are concluded, all the agriculturists of the district have surrounded the spot, each man brandishing a large knife, and pointing it towards the captive. He is then stripped naked, the priest raises his hand, and the bloody ceremony commences.

With a fierce yell, the Khonds rush upon their victim and actually slice the flesh from his bones until hardly more than a skeleton remains. Despite the risk of receiving wounds from a friendly hand in the scramble, and the embarrassment that more or less must necessarily arise from the congregated numbers, they are sufficiently adroit in the use of the knife to prolong the sufferings of the wretch at the stake for a considerable period after the carnage has commenced, in order that the flesh dedicated to their Ceres, and sown in the fields, to propitiate a fruitful harvest, may be removed from the body ere life depart, after which they consider it not to be so efficacious.

One day during the war, a Khond entered the camp of our second brigade, and earnestly requesting an interview with the brigadier, stated that he had

important information to give. On proceeding the day before, he said, to the spot where the customary annual sacrifice was expected to be held, to his amazement, he discerned no signs of it, and was informed that, at Dugerpersaud, three days hence, he would find so much flesh, and white instead of black, as usual, as would astonish him.

Revolving in his mind this reply it occurred to him, that a design was on foot to destroy a party of the British, and, instigated to turn traitor by the hope of procuring some of the ardent waters of Europe, to which he had taken a mighty fancy since he partook of certain mess supplies that had fallen into the enemies hands, he had accordingly tendered his information. By some unaccountable and fatal inattention, no regard whatever was paid to this mans relation; the sequel proved the truth of it. Three days after his departure, the melancholy intelligence was received in the same camp, that a party of our troops, not dreaming of an attack, had been cut to pieces while descending a mountain pass.

The practice among the Khonds of offering human life as a sacrifice to the god of the earth, according to one of their traditions, had its rise in the following occurrence.

Their ancestors had a queen, under whose conduct the tribes emigrated from the mountainous land of their origin, far from their present location. In her time, the 'waters were upon the face of the earth' and there was hardly resting place for a mans foot. Chancing to wound herself with an axe, the queen was astonished to observe that the blood which issued from the wound had the effect of indurating the ground where before it was soft and muddy. Pondering on this miracle, she took the resolution of yielding herself a sacrifice for the general good; and accordingly, intimated to her race, that if her blood was dispersed upon the surface of their now sloughy and unprofitable lands, they would become consistent and fruitful. She was immolated, and the expectations of the tribe were fulfilled. Ever since then it has been considered necessary, in order to prevent the earth returning to its former state, to celebrate a similar sacrifice, and sprinkle it with human blood.

In offering their oblations to the earth, the Khonds do not conform to one particular mode of sacrifice. In some parts of the country, for about a month before the day appointed for the slaughter of the victim, he is led out of his place of confinement, with much ceremony, his figure decorated with garlands of flowers. The inhabitants of the district meet to feast together, and excited with toddy, they dance around the wretched prisoner to their rude music and still ruder songs. In the course of these orgies, they contrive, notwithstanding their ardour for the blood of the victim, not to molest him, his person being held sacred from the hour of his doom to his last moments.

A post is planted in the earth, with certain incantations, on the top of which there is the figure of a bird typical of Thadhadevata, the earth; a similar figure, in brass, is likewise buried at the foot of the post. The day preceding the sacrifice, the victim is seated at the bottom of the post, and usually intoxicated with toddy (the juice of the palm tree, in a state of fermentation). Dancing around him, the Khonds apostrophize the earth, and solicit in return for their offering, a plentiful season.

The next day he is again inebriated; his body is anointed with oil; every person present touches the anointed parts, and wipes off the oil on his own head. They then proceed in procession around the village, carrying the victim, and preceded by music and a pole, to the top of which are attached tufts of peacocks feathers.

On returning to the post, placed near three stones, which typify the god of the village, they dig a pit, and make the blood of a hog, sacrificed on the spot, flow into it. Into this hole the victim is thrust, being in a state of insensibility from the intoxicating liquors he has been compelled to partake of. He is then held down by several persons, with his face submerged in the blood and mire at the bottom of the pit until he ceases to exist.

Sometimes he is suspended by his feet and back of the neck to the ends of the pit, till fatigue forces him to fall into it, which is the signal for his destruction. During these sacrifices, the noise produced by the yells of the ministers of these infernal rites, and by their musical instruments, drown the cries of the victim, if he utter any. The priest then proceeds to cut a piece of flesh off the corpse, and with further ceremonies dedicates it as an offering to the earth, and subsequently inters it contiguously to the village idol previously alluded to. The rest of the people sever pieces of flesh from the corpse, and carry them to their respected villages, where the same ceremonies are observed in the internment of the flesh before the idols; and other pieces are buried in the fields, to which they are carried in procession with music.

The head and face of the body are not touched. The flesh being all removed from the skeleton, it is buried along with the head in the same pit which served as the place of sacrifice. These rites are concluded by the sacrifice of a calf by women, dressed in male attire, and armed. They drink, and dance around the post, and with the inhabitants of their village, eat the flesh, and dismiss the priest who has presided at the ceremony with a present of rice and a hog."

And here the following snippets will not go amiss.

Extract from a letter from Capt. Campbell, dated Goomsur, 25th February [1838]:

"I have been most fortunate in my late expedition among the wild Khonds of Goomsur, and have received no less than 103 children of various ages, who were intended for sacrifice by these barbarians, and that without the application of force; these children are now at head-quarters, and form a most interesting group, happy, such as were aware of their situation, in having escaped the fate which awaited them."

Sale of Children

"At the criminal sessions, January 18 [1838] a native, named Vullyammah, pleaded guilt to two indictments for child-stealing, and was sentenced to transportation for seven years on each. During the investigation of this case, the fact was elicited and established, as well by documentary as oral evidence, that the sale of children is recognized as a species of legal traffic."

The victims were usually acquired from the human traffickers by the Khonds.

To return to the story.

"These mountaineers are reported to worship the earth, moon, and sun. Amongst other deities, they adore Dherma Devata, to whom they make offerings of rice and tumeric. When the rice is standing in the fields, they offer liquor, fowls, and rice to a god of the jungles. The village god I have mentioned, as represented by a pile of three stones, is called Jacari Penuga. On particular occasions, dressed dolls and figures of birds are seated on these stones. The aid of the deity is usually invoked prior to an enterprise being undertaken.

There is also a phallus deity, designated Jarra Pennu; he is conjectured to employ small-pox as the weapon of his wrath, and, accordingly, when that disease appears in the country, offerings are made to this deity of sheep and fowls, to deprecate his anger.

In case of a drought visiting the country, petitions are presented to a god of rain, on which occasions sheep are slaughtered beneath a tree, and worship made by a priest, who in recompense takes half the flesh of the sheep.

The Khonds are said to be separated into eighteen tribes, the terraced land inhabited by them, recent discoveries have proved to extend about fifty miles

westward from its eastern limit on the summit of the Goomsur ghauts; it then descends towards the plain upon which Nagpore is situated.

In the course of the war, many particulars were learned respecting the customs of the Khonds. When a marriage takes place amongst them, a party of the bridegroom's friends proceed to the house belonging to the parents of the female and demand her in marriage. If they are disposed to accede, they signify their assent by presenting a buffalo to the party who brought the overtures. They, on their return to the suitor, kill the animal, roast the flesh and partake of it.

The succeeding day, the relations of the intended bride return the visit, and are shown the whole of the man's property. If they take a fancy for any part of his valuables, custom authorises them to demand it, and it is henceforth considered to be the property of the bride, although not taken away on this occasion. In the course of a short time, the bridegroom's family, himself at the head of them, proceed to the bride's house to present the property previously solicited. They are received with feasting, a number of buffalo's being presented to them in return; visits and feasting take place, and in every case the visitors carry away with them the surplus viands.

The mother and father of the man must proceed to the bride's house, to ascertain when she is willing to surrender herself to her intended husband; a day is then appointed, and a place of meeting. At the time fixed, mats are spread upon the ground for the lady to walk on, and one is carried over her, to protect her person from the sun. From her numerous relatives she receives all necessary household stuff and utensils, and she then proceeds in procession to the place where her intended partner and his friends are expected to be waiting.

Arriving here, they are invited by her party to come and carry her away; a ceremony performed under the semblance of a fight between both parties, who are armed with sticks and stones. She is subsequently placed in an inner court of the bridegroom's house, upon a large stool, and on a certain signal his friends pour water over her. The confusion and alarm produced on the nerves of the young lady are taken advantage of by the bridegroom's younger sisters or brothers, previously concealed, to snatch from her finger her ring. On her requesting its restoration, they remove from their person some valuable ornament, and offer it to her instead.

A priest then enters, bearing a cord, some tumeric, and the nut of a certain tree, which he strings upon the cord. He beckons the bride and bridegroom to follow him, and they proceed, unattended, to a neighbouring

wood, where they find a hut, constructed of sticks and leaves. The priest ties them together with the cord, and, wishing them prosperity and happiness, leaves them. On the return of the husband and wife to his dwelling, hogs and other animals are killed; another feat is celebrated, and at the conclusion, the priest dismissed with presents of rice, flesh and liquor.

On a child being born in a family, it is the custom amongst the Khonds for the mother not to eat out of the household vessels until the expiration of a month after the birth, when a libation of liquor is poured on the ground to the goddess of the earth, whose protection is invoked for the child. Six months after, a feast is held, on which occasion the priest of the village is summoned, to ascertain by divination, what the name of the child is going to be. This he performs by means of a sickle suspended by a cord. As certain names are repeated in order, quantities of rice are poured upon the sickle. When the sickle is observed to move under the influence of the dropping rice, the name mentioned at the time is chosen for the child.

At funerals, the following ceremonies are observed. As soon as life has ceased, a sheep is tied to the foot of the corpse, which, together with it, his brass eating dish, drinking vessels, ornaments, and grain, is conveyed to the spot intended for the cremation of the body, where all are burned with the sheep, dancers being hired who perform certain dances. On the twelfth day after this rite, the spot is again visited by the deceased's relations, who walk around it to the sound of drums, and perform some ceremonies; they then return and feast together.

After this sketch of the rude institutions and manners of the Khonds, I return to the narrative of the war.

Our camp was pitched within a few hundred yards of the ghurry or fortalice of Oodagherry. It stood near the point of a delta, formed by a turn in the nullah separating the two most conspicuous Khond tribes from each other. On the whole, the position was not ill-chosen; a sudden rush on our camp at night by an enemy being prevented by the precipitous banks of the watercourse, though, perhaps under cover, a lurking foe might have advanced to within a few feet of us; the depth of the ravine, however, the steep banks of it, and the disintegrated nature of the soil through which the stream had excavated its channel, would have greatly embarrassed him. It will hereafter appear that this nullah contributed, in no considerable degree, to save a small detachment of our troops from being exterminated by the hoards of Khonds that threatened them when greatly weakened by the number of sick, and the parties they had been ordered to detach.

Khondistan is intersected by many such streams, which in military operations were often turned to good account. On one occasion, during the second campaign a party of our troops occupied the dry channel of one of these water courses, concealing their numbers under cover of the banks. A large force of the enemy were drawn within fire by the feigned retreat of a smaller detachment thrown out from the main body towards their position, and most of them made to bite the dust; such as escaped musketry were put to death or captured by a party of cavalry placed in ambuscade.

The fortalice of Oodagherry is about twenty paces square, with semi-towers projecting from the middle of each face, and which, being covered by thatch made of the leaves of the coco-nut tree or Palmyra, answer the purposes of a dwelling, as well as flanking defences to the curtains of the work and watch-towers. Nine feet high, the walls are built of earth, and perforated with holes, through which cylinders of pottery being inserted, loopholes for matchlocks are thus obtained. In the side of the south face was the gateway. An unfinished ditch followed the conformation of the walls on the exterior. Westward the walls rested on and derived some accession of strength from the nullah previously noted.

On marching upon this ghurry, at the time we first arrived, we expected to encounter some opposition. The place, however, was found deserted, the inmates, presumed to be the family of the Goomsur rajah, having escaped as soon as they descried the approach of our troops across the plain. Contiguous to the fort we found a native village abandoned with the same precipitation, much of the household furniture, dogs and fowls, and half consumed rice, and other food, being forgotten in their alarm and hurry to escape. Within nearly every house of this native settlement we found a huge piece of basket work, extending from the floor to the roof of the dwelling. A sepoy, thrusting his sword into one, gratified us with the sight of a stream of paddy flowing from the wound. Here was a store of food in case of our supplies failing. To preserve this supply of grain, now our chief commissariat, a native officers guard was established in the village, with strict instructions to be on the alert against surprise.

Pitching our tents, the first important news we collected was to the effect that Dhunnajee Bhunj, the rajah of Goomsur, had recently died at this place, and the Khonds, to corroborate this statement, which we were disposed to doubt, pointed to the place of his suttee.

A pit, two feet deep and eighteen across was the scene of the cremation of the body of the king and some of his favourite wives. A few pieces of calcined bones, some broken chatties or earthen ware vessels, and wood ashes, were the only vestiges of the rite. Time wore on; we had now been long in

a state of inactivity. Usually, towards night the Khonds, who visited us during the day, and bartered fowls, sheep, eggs, and rice, for cloth, paper, and tobacco, would retire in the order they came. The camp then fell into silence, which was only now and then disturbed by the exchange of sign and countersign with the sentries, in low voices, the low bark of a fox in the nullah below, or the whistle of a lapwing above.

In my search after snipe in a range of rice fields, I found it necessary to be very cautious to avoid getting entangled among the armed men who followed me up and down on either hand, at a respectable distance however. One day I observed two Khonds gradually approaching me, one from either bank of the marsh. I was anxious to decline, as much as possible, an opportunity of measuring my strength against our doubtful friends, for so we now began to suppose them, as it might lead to a rupture, which we wished to avoid, depending on them in great measure for our supplies, and hoping to confirm them as friends and auxiliaries during future operations. It occurred to me that a display of my skill as a sportsman would tend to deter the men from closing in on me from either bank of the marsh. Accordingly, I marked down a brace of snipes, and on their rising, firing right and left, bringing them down.

This wrought like a charm on the weak understandings of these men; they instantly hurried away, and left me in undisputed possession of the rice fields.

Uneasy at hearing nothing from the low country, our commanding officer at length employed a Khond, with the promise of a reward, to convey a letter through the Dugerpersaud pass, and endeavour to present it to any party of ours whom he might fall in with in that direction. The man returned with the letter, saying he had been deterred from proceeding further, owing to the country being infested by the rebels of lower Goomsur, who would have sacrificed him.

Disappointed at the ill-success of the Khond, impatient at our state of incertitude and inactivity, as well as the precariousness of our supplies, our commanding officer resolved to open communication with one of the detachments which had started from Codundah at the same time with us, and which we hoped had been enabled to establish itself at Dugerpersaud; a party was, therefore detached for this duty, and ordered to traverse the pass. They succeeded, having found a detachment below. In traversing this pass, the Undhera Khote, or dark fort, of Dugerpersaud, was passed.

A few days later our visit was returned, and we were given to understand that the commissioner would shortly make his appearance from below the ghaut. In the course of a few days the commissioner arrived with an increase

in forces. His first act was to consign to custody our besoy, or native diplomatist, who had been playing us false, and was in league with the enemy.

We now understood that a grand move had been determined on, to sweep the whole Goomsur country, and the territories allied to it, in our direction. Several coss to the northward, the territories of Outan Sing commence; an independent rajah, who governs a large tract of country, reputed to be well defended by stockaded positions, and a race of courageous and powerful men. Adjoining his country is that of the Boads, more warlike yet, and in greater numbers. An incursion into these districts would afford the troops the most lively satisfaction, and was anxiously expected by the officers.

Meanwhile, below the ghaut, the war was progressing favourably under the orders of Brigadier Taylor, whose proceedings were so ably planned, adroitly and vigorously executed, as to preclude the enemy from anywhere combining in force, and to disperse them whenever they attempted to show themselves. Fighting from behind the bamboo thickets, which overrun the face of the country, therefore, necessarily comprised the tactics of the foe, the majority of whom were Dundassies, a banditti in the pay of the rajah, and his chief instruments in exacting money from the unfortunate husbandmen of the country, when extravagance had exhausted the exchequer of the zemindars of Goomsur.

By our troops, dours, by day and night were, as usual, made against these delinquents, as well as on purpose to gain possession of the members of the rajah's family, without whom the polity of the country could not be settled. Pursuit was also made after several refractory chiefs who had refused to lay down their arms. Five thousand rupees had been set on the persons of Bundawhur Bhunj and Dhora Besoy, and a thousand and five hundred on individuals of minor note.

The second brigade, under Colonel Muriel, advanced and occupied Gullery, leaving a detachment at Koladah, a place of considerable importance in the history of Goomsur. The prince, whose cruelties I have more than once recorded, in 1814, conceived that a project was set on foot, by his wives and other members of his family, to dethrone him and elevate his son, Bhulbudder Bhunj, in his place. Impressed with this idea, he threw several of his wives and other women into confinement, where they languished for some time, under going every species of cruelty, under which many of them died.

When Colonel Fletcher reached Koladah, in pursuit of the rajah, he liberated the survivors of these prisoners, and collected from them that, during their confinement, they used to be chained in pairs to a log of wood, fixed in

the centre of an apartment, and pierced with holes, to hold a leg of each, one individual being seated opposite the other. In one case a very young girl declared that the person to whom she had been chained in this manner had expired, and the corpse was suffered to remain beside her until decomposition ensued, and it became covered in worms. In corroboration of this statement, they showed the excoriation the iron had left on their limbs.

In pursuing the rajah from Koladah towards Jarang, whither he had fled on the approach of the troops, the English force had the good fortune to release upwards of one hundred prisoners, of all ages and both sexes.

On Koladah being dismantled, as far as circumstances would admit of, and the bamboo defences destroyed, a well appeared sunk into the ground, into which, it was alleged, by some of the female slaves rescued from captivity, the carcases of the murdered had been thrown. In clearing it out, finger bones, skulls, and other parts of the human frame were turned up. In addition to this, five stakes were found in the fortress, and beneath them a pile of human bones.

In our time at Koladah, the shrine of Kalee was considered one of the greatest curiosities of this strange country, being the principal scene of the iniquitous orgies of the rajah. Deeply embowered in a jungle of bamboo trees, growing so thickly together as almost to exclude the light of day, stood, on the bank of a dark pool, rendered darker still by the shadows of those trees, the effigy of the goddess.

Hewn from a mass of grey stone, the figure bore some resemblance to the human form; but instead of the head and countenance of a female, an inverted skull, typical of the character of the deity surmounted the figure. The feet nearly touched an altar of the same material. Red stains upon the stone bore testimony to the inhuman rites that had been celebrated here. Dhunnajee Bhunj at this shrine offered the lives of such females of his seraglio as he was anxious to get rid of. The cruelties practised on the victims are too frightful to narrate. The knife having performed its work in the hand of the king, who usually undertook the principal office on such occasions, and as soon as it was evident that the last throes had ceased, and the goddess had quaffed to the dregs her draught, the remains of the sacrificed were thrown into the pond beneath, where they were speedily devoured by the alligators that inhabit it.

Major Butler, of the 21st regiment of Native Infantry, commanding the forces above the Ghauts, now received instructions to advance on Huzzerguddah, breaking up his camp, and moving with his detachment, in the middle of the night, in a north-westerly direction from Woodagherry. On

reaching Huzzerguddah, a detachment of thirty men was to be left there, under an officer; from thence the force was to continue its route towards Moondagham, where the commissioner had strong grounds for suspecting members of the late rajah's family would be discovered.

If this attempt to surprise them did not prove successful, Sam Besoi, Wootun Sing, or any other authority in the country, was to be called on to surrender them. The possession of the person of Brundawun Bhunj was first to be demanded; with him, it was conjectured, the females of the family were living. It was strictly enjoined that no attempt was to be made to seize any of the native chiefs unless success was certain. There was no reason to suppose that they would not attend Mr. Russell's summons to wait upon him at Huzzerguddah, after his arrival there.

The guide attached to the party was stated to be thoroughly acquainted with the country between Woodagherry and Moondagham, a disputed property between Wootun Sing, of Zentilguddah, and the Boad rajah; and he had promised, in the event of our search after the royal family in the first instance proving fruitless, to ascertain from his acquaintances in the neighbourhood of Moondagham, whither they had fled, and where they were concealed. In fine, the districts belonging to the rajah of Boad were not to be entered.

Such is an outline of the instructions delivered to our commanding officer; and accordingly, the ensuing night, the detachment set out on its march to Huzzerguddah. The important post of Wooddagherry, at which the commissioner remained, was not left without protection; a party that had arrived a day or two before our departure defended it.

For several hours, the progress of the detachment was uninterrupted; no enemy appeared, and the country offered very few impediments to the march of an army; towards morning, however, in consequence of its leading ranks outstripping the artillery, baggage and rear guard, they became separated, whilst the country grew more difficult of access. Clumps of rocks, patches of jungle, and tortuous water-courses frequently occurred, and prevented the rear ranks from overtaking those in advance.

At last they became fairly lost, and were beginning to surrender all hope of joining their comrades, when a sepoy, chancing to stray a few yards to the right hand, discovered, fastened to the trunk of a tree, a sheet of foolscap paper; several trees were marked in like manner, and thus was a clue afforded for the extrication of the rear guard from the labyrinth they had become involved in.

Aware that no enemy was near to molest the rear guard, and anxious to advance with as much celerity as possible upon Huzzerguddah, a few miles

in front, the officer commanding the party had pushed on his men without the rear guard marking the trees, to point to a proper road. In the course of the night, the latter overtook the main body at the village alluded to, where no persons of any eminence had been discovered, notwithstanding the troops literally turned the houses inside out, and examined every nook and corner by the light of a fire kindled in the main street with bundles of straw, leaves and rubbish. Around this blazing pile the sepoys were congregated, for the night was cold and cheerless.

The march was resumed over rice fields, only passable along the uneven banks that separated on field from another. Before long, on the opposite side of a range of rice fields, a village appeared, swarming with women and children, who flocked to the doors of their dwellings and the outlets of the village. Half unclad, they presented a singular sight, as, waving the torches they held, they examined our numbers and appearance, whilst their voices were raised, either to menace or welcome; the guide declared that they were our friends.

At daylight, the troops were descending a rugged defile, through which they had been toiling for some time. The loose stones scattered upon the ground formed great obstacles to the passage of the artillery and camp equipage; indeed, the use of ordnance in these nightly enterprises was much to be deprecated, in as much as the guns being suspended between long bamboo poles, born on the shoulders of coolies, to pass a zig zag defile was almost impossible, there being no room for the poles to traverse; a detachment of artillery men, equipped with rockets armed with spherical case would be more efficacious. The defile opened upon a landscape of forest and hills. The guide exclaimed that a place where lofty dammer trees had been cleared was Moondagham, and before long the village was visible.

In an open space, at no great distance from it, we encamped. As usual the officers of the detachment were indebted to the commanding officer for their breakfast. Major Butler's hospitality was renowned; throughout the period I was attached to his party, he kept an open house, or rather an open tent. But this is faint praise to bestow upon a man whose active exertions repeatedly merited the commendations of his superiors.

Breakfast over, a few of the inhabitants of Moondagham made their appearance, and in reply to our interrogatories, pretended that they knew nothing whatever of the rajah's family or the proscribed chiefs. In the evening, in conformity to instructions Major Butler left us on his return to Huzzerguddah.

Our force was now diminished to two officers and forty-nine men. We were surrounded by warlike races. The matchlock men of Wootun Sing were reputed to be a formidable body, and of the valour of the Boads I have already spoken. It was therefore, expedient to be on the alert, to obviate a surprise by night.

No sooner had our small camp fallen into deep silence, than there arose from the forest behind our position an uproar which caused every man of the detachment to start to his feet, and seize his arms, to hurry in the direction of these strange sounds. The next moment, two huge elephants burst through the trees, followed by the party who, under Major Butler, had separated from us a few hours before.

We gathered from them that, on their way back to Huzzerguddah, the party were intercepted by these beasts, which had belonged to the late rajah, and were on their way, under the care of their mahouts, to a village in possession of the rebel chiefs. The mahouts had also communicated to them, that the rajah's family had been conveyed to Calingia, in the Khond country behind us, having quitted Woodagherry the very evening we arrived there. Transferring the charge of the prize to us, the captors resumed their route to Huzzerguddah.

The forenoon of the next day was occupied in examining a deserted village, some distance from the camp; nothing within it was worthy of observation, except the musical instruments used by the inhabitants, consisting of large kettle drums, cymbals, tomtoms, a kind of clarinet, conch shells, and a small guitar made of bamboo sticks. The large drums called the inhabitants from the forest which skirted the cultivated track furnishing this village with rice. They stood about a mile off, gesticulating most violently, and manifested no disposition to approach us, as we waved the branch of a tree in token of amity.

As soon as we got back to the camp, a messenger brought a letter from Huzzerguddah, directing the detachment to move at dark that evening to a lawn, in the neighbourhood of Poosarah, on the frontier of the Chickapaud seminary, where it was supposed the Mahadavy [Mahadevi] and two sons of the late rajah, together with Brundawun Bhunj, and some females of importance, had taken shelter.

The force at Huzzerguddah was to move at the same time, for the same purpose; but, in case of our reaching the place of destination first, we were to commence operations immediately. A guide was sent with the messenger, who had been engaged to conduct us to the precise spot where the individuals were concealed. The detachment accordingly started at sun set, following the

guide, who told us we should not effect our objective without much bloodshed, as the party we were proceeding against were very determined, and, he though, would sell their liberty dearly.

The track, which was at no time very distinct, now seemed to be obliterated altogether, and the guide only by dint of parting the branches of the trees and high lemon grass, was enabled to distinguish it. By this time it was past midnight, and we ought to have arrived at the town. The guide was asked whether he was certain he had not missed the road, he replied that he had not.

At the expiration of another hour, his movements were obviously becoming confused and uncertain. Murmurs broke out among the sepoys, and some went so far as to threaten the guide with summary punishment for playing false. He protested his acquaintance with the road, but at last on pushing aside a mass of tangled underwood, a profound chasm appeared. At this sight the guide fairly acknowledged himself lost, and began to weep.

He was immediately secured and bound with ropes; the sepoys, satisfied of his treachery, could scarcely restrain themselves from carrying their threats into execution. Advancing to the brink of the precipice, I could see by the moon light a vast fissure of great depth, and quite impassable, a few steps more and the whole party would have met with certain destruction.

A council of war was held, and it was determined, since nothing more could be elicited from the guide, who maintained a sulky silence, and being quite at a loss to conjecture the direction of Huzzerddah, to retrace our steps towards our encamping ground at Moondagham, where we arrived at about day-break, quite exhausted with our fruitless adventure.

The next morning a messenger was sent to Huzzerguddah, with tidings of our misfortune. While waiting for his reappearance, we were surprised, in the forenoon of the same day, with a visit from Wootan Sing, who had been prevailed upon by his friends to wait on us. He came in full procession, attended by a band of matchlock men, and marching to the sound of such instruments as I have described. He was ushered into the officers tent, a common baggage one, for want of a better, and seated on a bullock trunk, chairs being at a discount amongst our camp equipage. We strove to inculcate upon him the propriety of assisting us in capturing those whom we were in search of, and told him that he would gain more by being on friendly terms than in endeavouring to thwart and embarrass our measures. He acquiesced, and after making the fairest promises, departed.

This party was crossing the limits of our camp when a despatch was received from Pooserah, conveying the commissioner's orders to adopt every

means to gain possession of the person of our late guest Wootun Sing; if he refused to come in by fair means, coercion was to be used.

We hurried after the chief, and endeavoured to persuade him that his best policy would be to confide in our honour, and attend upon the commissioner, promising that no harm should befall him. Reluctantly, he consented, seeing that his small party was not a match for our force, and that resistance would be hopeless. With the exception of five, his dependents disappeared.

The letter last received contained our recall to Pooserah, and, as usual, we started our march in the evening, arriving at that place the next morning by seven. It was during this march that I had the opportunity of beholding one of the grandest sights witnessed in a tropical climate.

In the course of our nights journey, we had repeatedly observed lights issuing from the hills over our heads; occasionally they would grow more vivid, and then suddenly die away, appearing in another quarter. That these were the lights of the mountaineers, preparing to resist our progress, was our first impression; but as none showed themselves, we ascribed the appearance to the right cause; in short, the jungle on the sides of the hills had ignited spontaneously.

In India, during the prevalence of the hot season the bamboo trees oscillating under the influence of the winds, rub against each other, and combustion ensues; the fire rapidly diffuses itself, and in the course of a very short time envelopes the forest in one sheet of flame. As we pursued our journey the fires grew more frequent, and at length, rounding a hill, we beheld the whole side of the mountain presenting the appearance of a red hot forest. From their excessive state of dryness, the trees ignited, as it were at once, and became incandescent. In other places, vast trees, of primeval growth, in the same state, upon the summit of the mountain, stood boldly forward in relief against the dark sky beyond. We passed close under the foot of the eminence, and had some difficulty avoiding the burning embers, no words can express the effect of this scene.

Pooserah, in the zemindary of Chickapaud, is a village of huts, surrounded by hills and jungles, which are full of game. Mornings and evenings, the screams of the pea-fowl, the crowing of the jungle-cocks, and singular noise that indicates the presence of elk, were audible. After two days stay at this place, during which I heard that, in some of the nightly dours, a few of the fugitives had been apprehended, I was again detached to Juggernautporam. On my way thither, for the first and only time in this country, I observed some stone ruins and pieces of sculpture.

While quartered here, I learned many particulars respecting the means used by the chiefs of these wild countries to extort information from prisoners, or their own people. In some cases, they insert quills charged with gunpowder into the ears and noses of these poor wretches, and then explode them. Occasionally, to the flaps of their ears they suspend a musket by the hammer and cock. Spies, when caught are deprived of their noses and ears, and sometimes made shorter by a head if an endorsement with bamboos fail to elicit the required intelligence.

About this time the commissioner was resolved to leave no means untried in order to carry his plans into execution, the chief of Huzzerguddah, Sam Besoi, and he of Poorannugger, came in; notwithstanding which there was much reason to doubt the sincerity of their professions, and to conjecture that the fair promises made by the different chiefs were only to gain time.

Moreover, accounts were daily received of small detachments of our men being destroyed while conveying supplies and carrying despatches.

In consequence of the vicissitudes of this climate, within the short space of four and twenty hours, the nights being remarkably cold and the heat during the day excessive, sickness began to appear among the troops, in the shape of the worst description of jungle-fever; the frightful ravages committed by it amongst the Goomsur force, I may venture to say, had no parallel in the history of war. What contributed greatly to promote sickness were, the arduous duties of the campaign, night being invariably, though necessarily, chosen as the time for operations; the want of comfort and accommodation, sustained alike by officers and men; and the pernicious quality of the water, which was usually obtained from pools formed by runnel which, in their descent from the mountains, brought down rotten leaves, sticks, and other decayed vegetable matter.

At Juggernautporam, the few tents which comprised our camp stood on a piece of ground that had been cleared from the forest, and which in any direction did not measure more than two hundred yards across; the lofty forest trees on every hand confined the view, and the people of the country, had they possessed sufficient tact, might have smoked us out by setting fire to the surrounding forest.

Our time hung very heavily. An officer of the infantry, named Stewart, and myself, occupied a small baggage tent not more than six feet high between the poles. We found the heat insufferable, as no wind could reach our circumscribed position. Fever attacked us simultaneously, though we did not yield to it. Supplies were abundant, in consequence of our having found a herd of goodly cattle in a penfold, near the huts adjoining our camp, as well

as a magazine of grain, which I discovered in a wolsa in the neighbouring forest, when searching for game. The only circumstance which broke the monotony of our camp was that at sunset, a strain of distant music would be heard in the direction of the great Mahanuddy river.

One day Stewart and I, seated in our tent, were wondering how long we were to remain doing nothing, when an armed party issued from the jungle. They brought despatches, informing us that the Khond tribes had risen against the English, and occupied in some force a hill that commanded the approach to Woodagherry from this side, whence they had made several descents upon our people, and cut up some of them; moreover, that the small force at Woodagherry was in great jeopardy, being surrounded by hordes of savages, who seemed only to be waiting the opportunity, when fatigue and a relaxed vigilance had thrown it off its guard, to fall on them. They added, that rumours were afloat respecting the massacre of a body of troops in one of the passes connecting the Khond country with Lower Goomsur.

It will be seen, in the sequel, that these reports were too well founded. A letter addressed to me contained the following expressions, which threw some light on my future movements:

"The people (meaning Brundawun Bhunj and the family we had been all this time in pursuit of) are not yet brought in , but hourly expected; my detachment, combined with yours will form the escort to take them to Gullery. Letters from Campbell last evening mentioned that no detailed accounts have been received respecting the fate of the officers and men who were attacked in the Dugerpersaud Pass. The troops now in advance will fall back immediately upon Woodagherry, to repel the threatening attitude of the enemy".

The purport of the despatches was to recall us to Chickapaud. Accordingly, we soon struck camp and were rejoiced to find ourselves leaving the unhealthy post of Juggernautporam. On arriving at Chickapaud, we found that Brundawun Bhunj had been delivered into the custody of the commissioner by Sam Besoi.

A day or two afterwards, Major Butler took command of a strong escort, to which I was attached, and, bidding farewell to these highlands, made his way to Gullery with the prisoners. A barricade of felled trees crossing a mountain pass - which, however, were speedily cut through—and a few straggling shots directed at us from the hills, was the only opposition we encountered in the course of the march. At Gullery, I collected the following particulars of the Dugerpersaud massacre.

At the period in question, although some parties of our troops, as I have already related, had been attacked in Khondistan, yet there was no ground for supposing that anything like a combined and formidable opposition would be made against us by the tribes.

The disposition of the troops in March, 1836 was as follows:- at Nowgaum, the headquarters of the first brigade were established, and was regarded as the centre upon the chain of posts in East Goomsur and Chamondee rested, and held connection with Aska, the nearest military depot in the Company's territory, by the high road on the right bank of the river, which was protected by armed parties stationed at the fort of Goomsur, the villages of Nuttingee and Vishnoo Chutram.

In this latter place, the late rajah had a palace. To the northward, there lay, in the space between the headquarters of this brigade and of the second at Gullery, the military posts of Koladah and Toomooroo, both furnished from the second division, which also supplies the details in advance at posts situated at the foot of the Daserpersaud pass at Charlee. It has already been seen that Oodagherry, Pooranugger, Chickapaud, and one or two other minor posts, were in occupation over the mountains.

A body of troops under the command of Ensign Gibbon and Second Lieutenant Bromley, of the artillery, left Oodagherry for the low country, escorting some state prisoners. This party was greatly increased in numbers by palanquin-bearers, coolies, and camp followers, who sought this opportunity to return to the plains below.

By the statements of the few survivors, as well as what I was able to collect from one of my own servants, who, accompanying the party, escaped into Daserpersaud, after receiving a severe wound in the back of his head from the hand of a Khond, it appeared that our detachment, utterly unaware of danger, traversed the plain between Oodagherry and the crest of the mountain in the most straggling manner, though some of the men noticed that, whenever a Khond was seen, he appeared to be hurrying towards a point of rendezvous somewhere in front of the column.

At length, as they approached the gorge of the ravine, down which lay the road to Daserpersaud, the attention of the officers was attracted to a formidable array of armed men lining the sides of the hills which flanked the first step to the declivity. Still, an idea that this foreboded no hostility, induced them to procrastinate making any disposition for defence.

On attaining the top of the pass, the bearers carrying the palaquins of some females of the royal family were suddenly struck with a panic, and, throwing down their conveyances, took to flight, some down the channel of

the ravine, and others along the narrow foot-path which hung over it, prompted thus to behave, perhaps, in consequence of the dead bodies of two sepoys and a cooly belonging to a former party being observed lying in the road, as well as by the yells which suddenly arose from the Khonds, who had begun to vibrate their spears and brandish their battle-axes.

At this juncture, a Havildar received a arrow in his side. No doubt could now be entertained that the Khonds were enemies, and the sepoys delivered their fire, too late, for the panic had extended to the men; it appeared that everyone was resolved to hurry on as fast as possible in front of his fellows.

The officers now became fully sensible of the danger which menaced the party, and exerted themselves to the utmost to frustrate the intention of the sepoys manifested of seeking safety in flight. However, neither their orders nor their expostulations were attended to, and presently a general flight took place. Very little beyond this, relating to the officers, deserving of any regard, is known, though I must not omit to mention the Lieut. Bromley's servant, when he perceived how affairs stood, implored his master to save himself by effecting a retreat along the ravine to the post below. To all his entreaties Bromley turned a deaf ear, and recommended the servant himself to escape, adding, that his resolution was fixed to remain.

By this time, the whole party had swept in an undisciplined and broken column into the ravine, where they fell easy prey to the Khonds, who rushed on them from the jungle. Ensign Gibbon fell first, it is supposed, as Bromley was heard calling to him without receiving a reply. The latter defended himself with musket he had snatched from a sepoys hand (not having taken the precaution of bringing his sword with him) for a long time, against great odds, till at length, on stepping aside to avoid a blow, unable to recover himself, he fell before his sanguinary opponents.

The bodies of the officers were not mutilated, though when found they were frightfully cut about the head, face and upper part of the frame, implying that they sold their lives dearly.

Simultaneously with this, were the attacks made upon Oodagherry and the post at Dugerpersaud; to the former I have already alluded. The force there, greatly diminished in its number of fighting men by sickness and the party it had detached through the pass under Ensign Gibbon, was reduced to extremity, and had it not been for the deep water course, which nearly encircled the camp, might have met the same fate as the party in the pass.

I could never understand why the Oodagherry detachment hesitated to throw itself into the adjoining fortalice, and there defend itself until succour arrived, seeing that it might have been made impregnable against any amount

of Khonds, who could make no impression with their arrows, the only missiles they possessed.

At Dugerpersaud, Serjeant James Barrett, of the artillery, in the absence of an officer, undismayed by the persevering attacks of the enemy, defended his camp with the most praiseworthy judgement and coolness, loading his six-pounder and firing it without any aid, and thereby frustrating all the attempts of the Khonds to dislodge him. This brave man refused to listen to the repeated entreaties of the native troops to fly, as the position was no longer tenable, owning to the high grass and surrounding jungle having been fired close to the tents; threatening to shoot the first man through the head who made an attempt to abandon his post. He subsequently fell a victim to the fever of the country, before his meritorious conduct could be rewarded. Both detachments were eventually relieved, and reprisals were made upon the treacherous Khonds.

It will be recalled that in the first of these papers, an anecdote is told respecting a Khond who was anxious to disclose the contemplated insurrection of his countrymen against the English. The Khonds were instigated by their chiefs and priests, as well as infuriated by the intoxicating liquor they partake at the time of seed sowing, to commit these acts of atrocity.

When the news of the discomfiture and massacre of our troops reached Gullery, no time was lost in despatching a strong party to the Dugerpersaud pass, in order to save any survivors who might be concealed in the rocks and woods, and to bring in the bodies of the officers if they could be found, and to relieve the detachment at Dugerpersaud.

Ascending a ghaut, a sight most revolting presented itself to the party.

The bodies of the slain in many cases had been frightfully disfigured, and were now bloated and bursting from having laid in the sun. The men could scarcely believe the evidence of their own senses when, proceeding a few paces more, they discovered that not only had our people fallen, but that the carnage extended to their own countrywomen.

Many beautiful girls, formally inmates of the rajah's harem, were lying dead: and this was not all; the most brutal indignities had been perpetrated upon their persons, some being impaled, others sawn in half. Is it to be wondered at, in subsequent operations, our people made every occasion serve the purpose for vengeance?

The bodies of the officers were brought into Gullery, and interred. These two young men died, as they had lived, together; for at collage, so great was their intimacy, and one bore a striking resemblance to the other in all respects, that they had been called 'twins' and in India, fate had thrown them together.

On the night of my arrival at Gullery, I was attacked by the worst kind of jungle-fever. Throughout the journey I had suffered excessive lassitude, which almost took away from me the power to sit on horseback, headache and a burning thirst. At the termination of our march, on entering my tent, I staggered across it, and fell upon the ground. I can hardly tell what followed for several days. I have never completely recovered from this attack, and such, I apprehend, is the case with every person who has had the misfortune to contract jungle-fever at Goomsur.

Perceiving there was no chance of recovery, I was sent to Nowgaum, where I found my old friend Brundawun Bhunj had arrived before me, and was to be tried by court martial for his crimes and misdemeanours.

By the first week in April, the fever was raging throughout the force. The death of Captain Kenny, of the 10th regiment of native Infantry, was one of the first reported in the roll of casualties. In that regiment according to report, the men were dying at the rate of six or seven daily.

The next demise reported was that of Ensign Worsley, of the 3rd. The deaths of Colonel Muriel and Ensign Gompertz speedily followed. In a word, every day's orders, if there was not an announcement of the death of an officer, someone had leave to quit the country on sick certificate. By immense doses of quinine, the disease was subdued, yet, in most instances, the constitution of the invalid was left permanently impaired, this violent tonic deranging the viscera.

Being confined to my tent at Nowgaum, I experienced some difficulty in obtaining information respecting the military movements, though an occasional visitor would communicate to me what had transpired. Amongst other items of intelligence, I learnt that Chusan Sing, one of the proscribed chiefs, upon whom a reward had been set, had been brought in by a party of four Sebundee peons. They had captured Judda Sing and a third person of importance, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Sooradah.

I also learnt that Dorabesoi, the most conspicuous insurgent at large, and for whose apprehension 5,000 rupees were offered, pressed hard by our people, had fled into the Dusapully zemindary. Dorabesoi, flying from Dusapully seminary, the chief of which had engaged to seize and deliver him to us, was next heard of at a place at no considerable distance beyond Gullery. Instant pursuit was made after him by a force from Gullery.

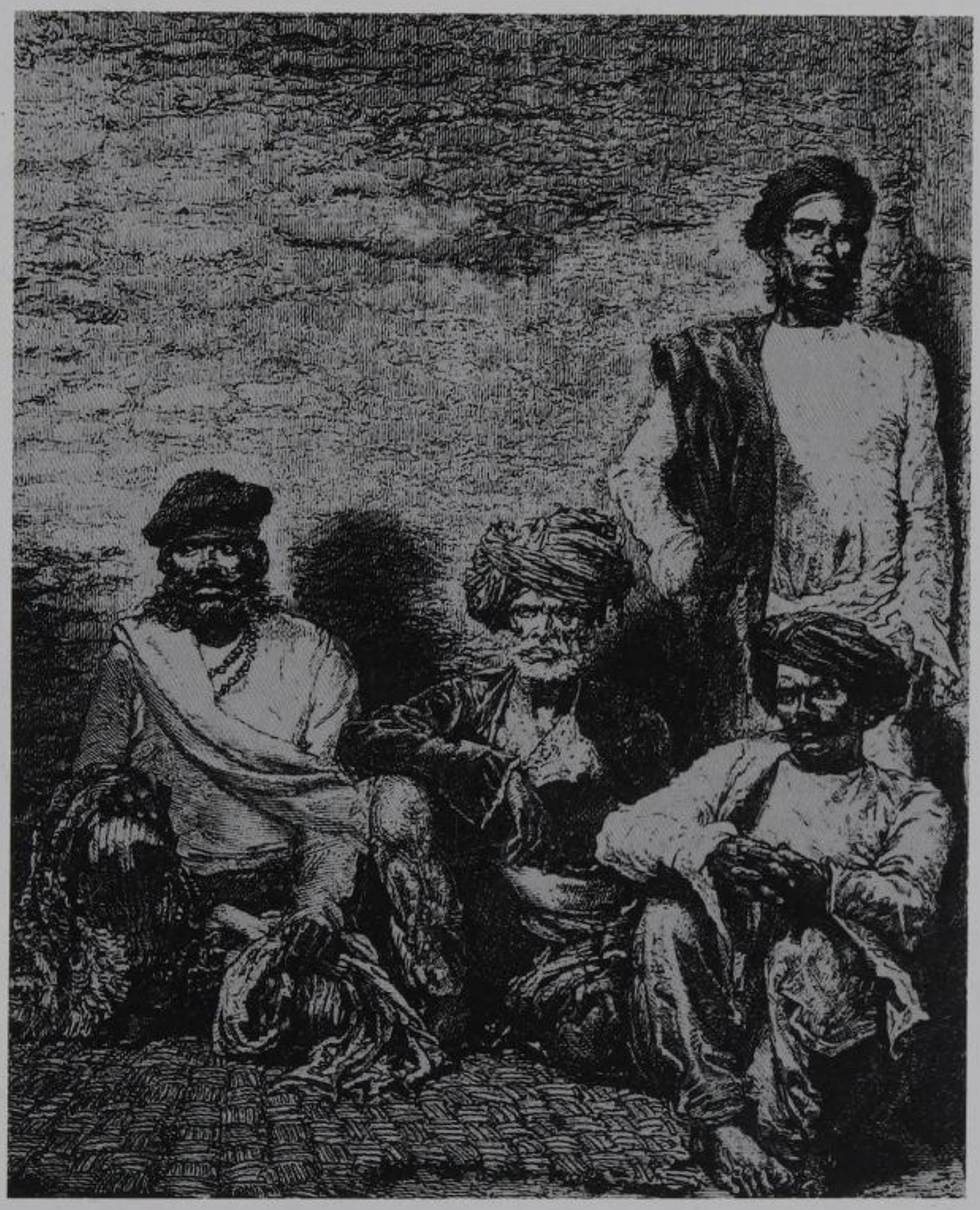
One night, they started at eight o'clock, under the guidance of an old women, who had promised to show the place where the insurgent was concealed. With the exception of about three-quarters of an hour, the troops did not halt for a moment, until 12 o'clock the subsequent day. The guide,

who on a former occasion had deceived Colonel Anderson, certainly conducted the force to the place where Dorabesoi had been, but it was strongly suspected that she had taken measures to intimate to him our approach.

At the moment the troops came in sight of the village where Dorabesoi had been, a heavy fire was opened upon them from both sides of the road, which killed two men and wounded seven. A ball passed through the hat of Captain Grimes, and Captain Macauley was touched by a ball in the leg. The village was burnt, and the party returned, having effected nothing.

Asiatic Journal, May–August 1842

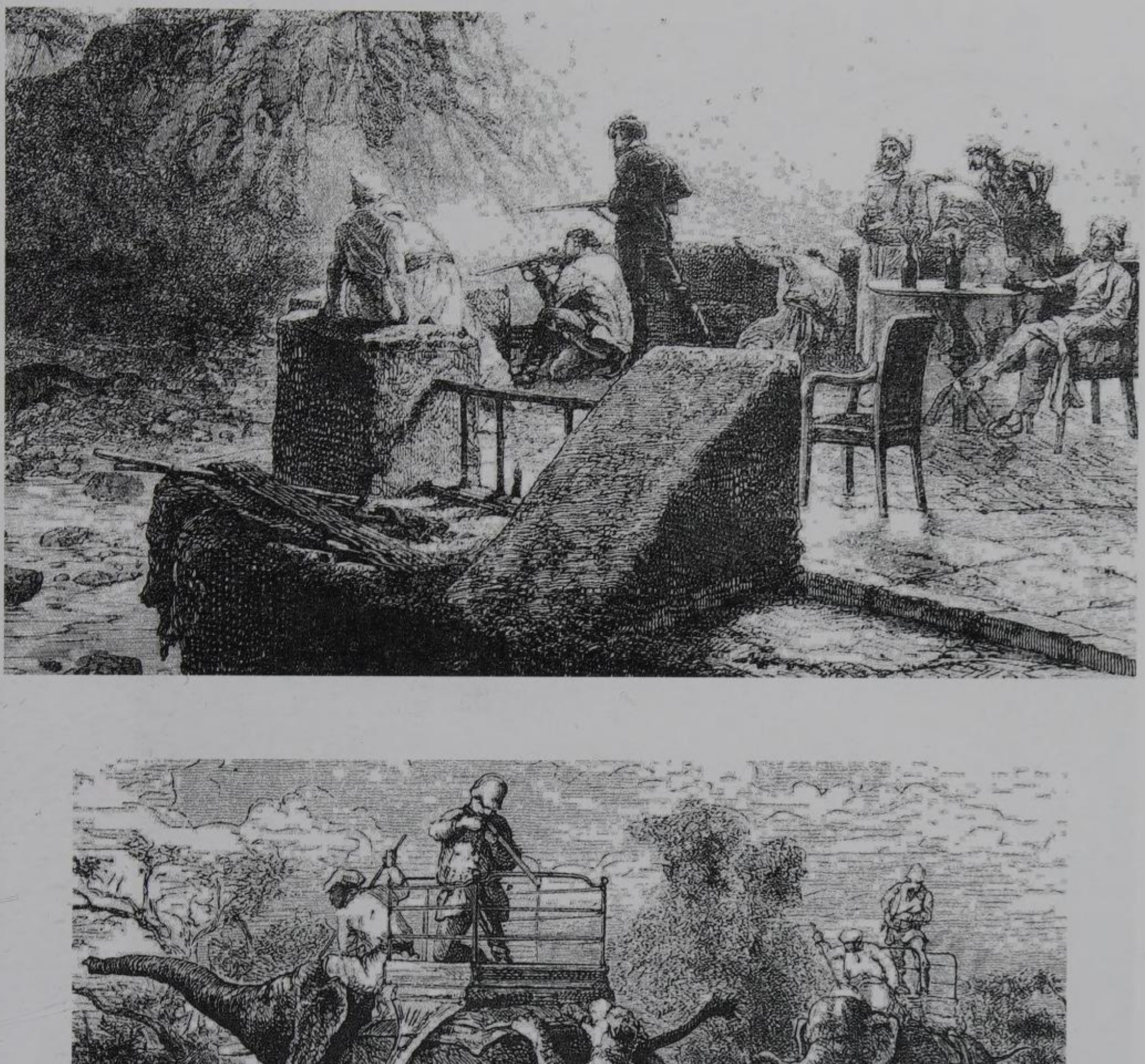
A group of thugs dividing their spoil.



Thugs in the prison of Aurungabad.

Dak-ghari.

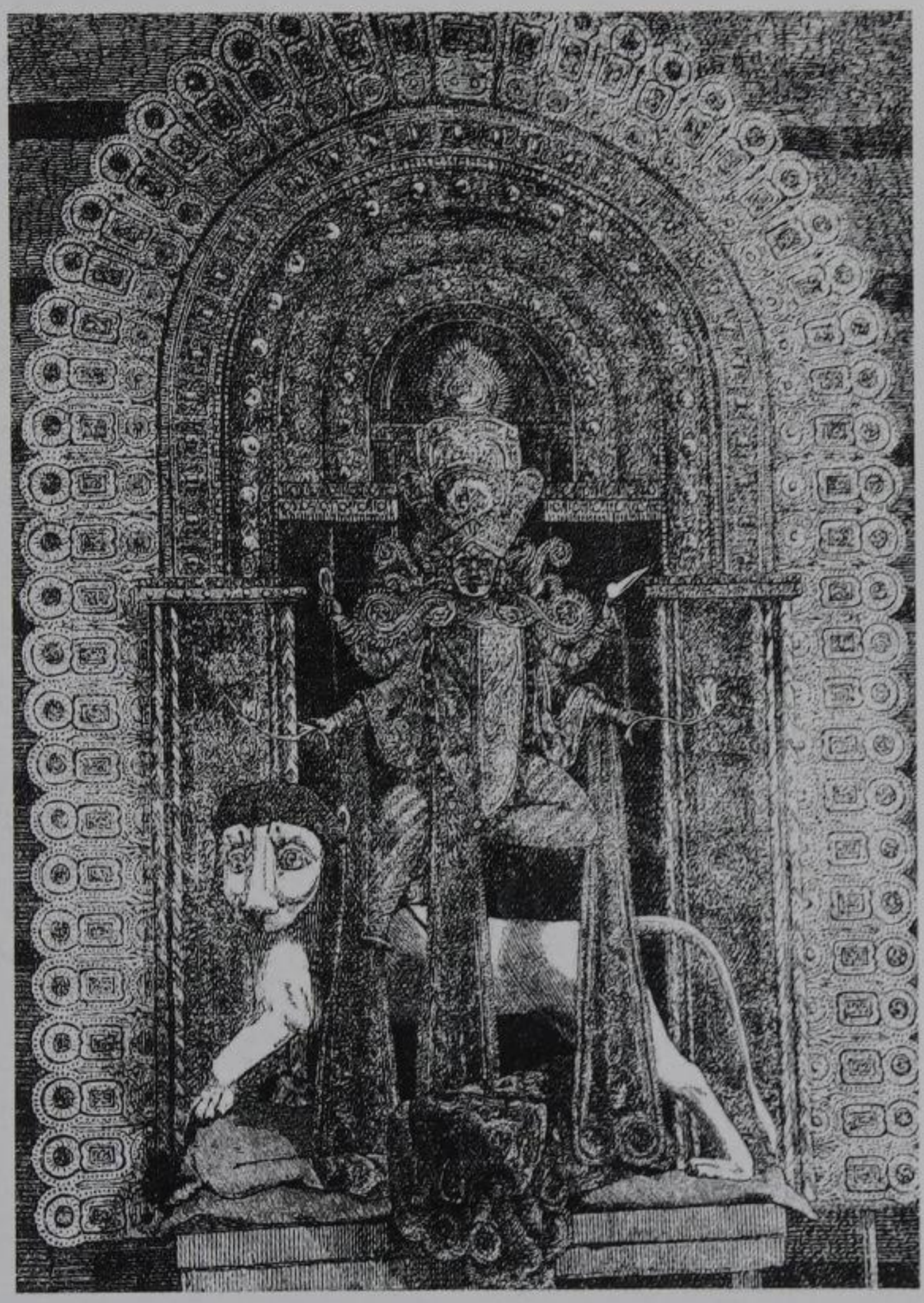
Chopaya or Hindu travelling carriage.



A tiger hunt at night and on elephants.

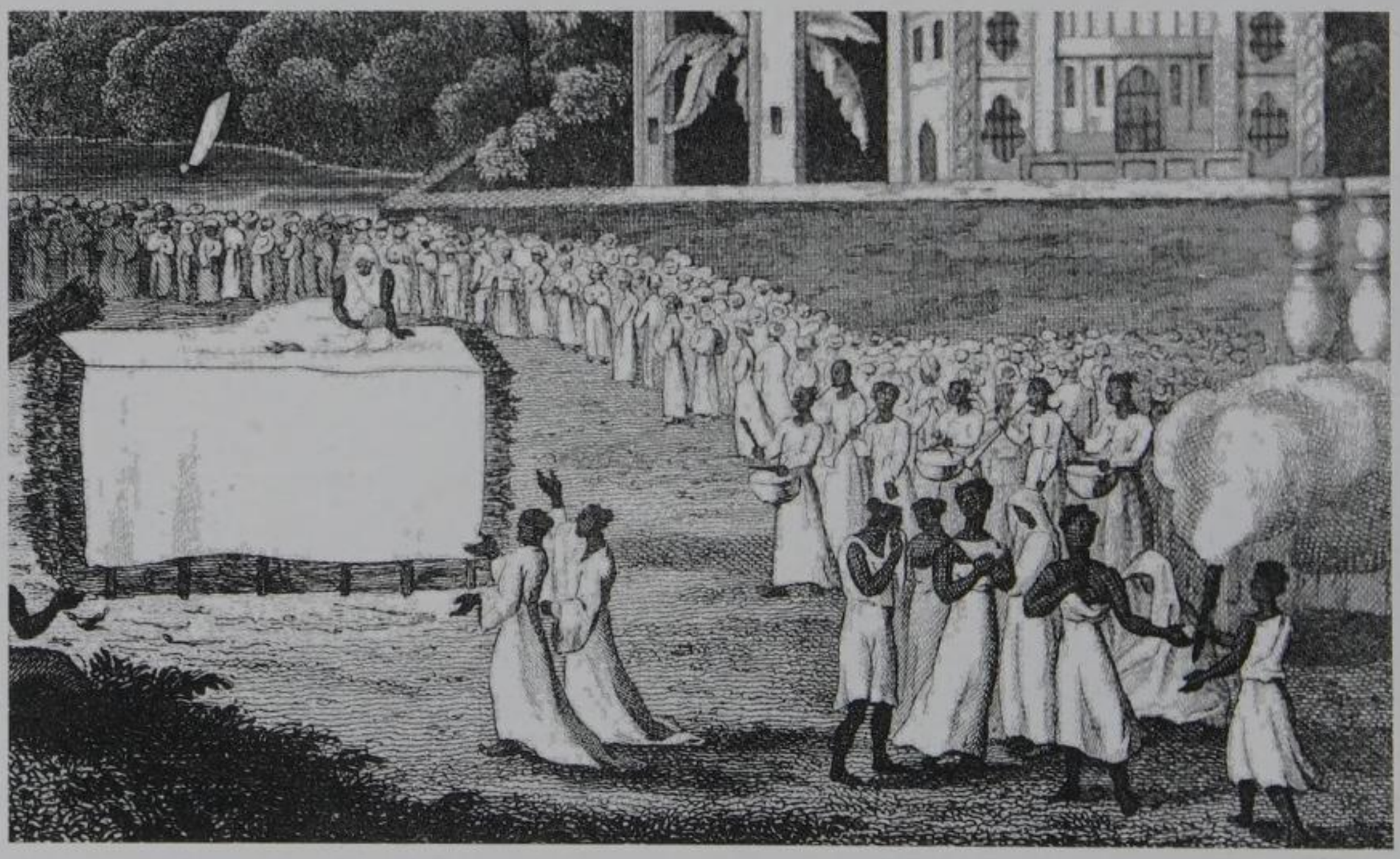
A cyclone at Calcutta.

Devotees of the goddess Kali.



"The goddess Kali, the favourite divinity of the people of Calcutta."

A procession with banners and tazias during the Muslim festival of Muharram.



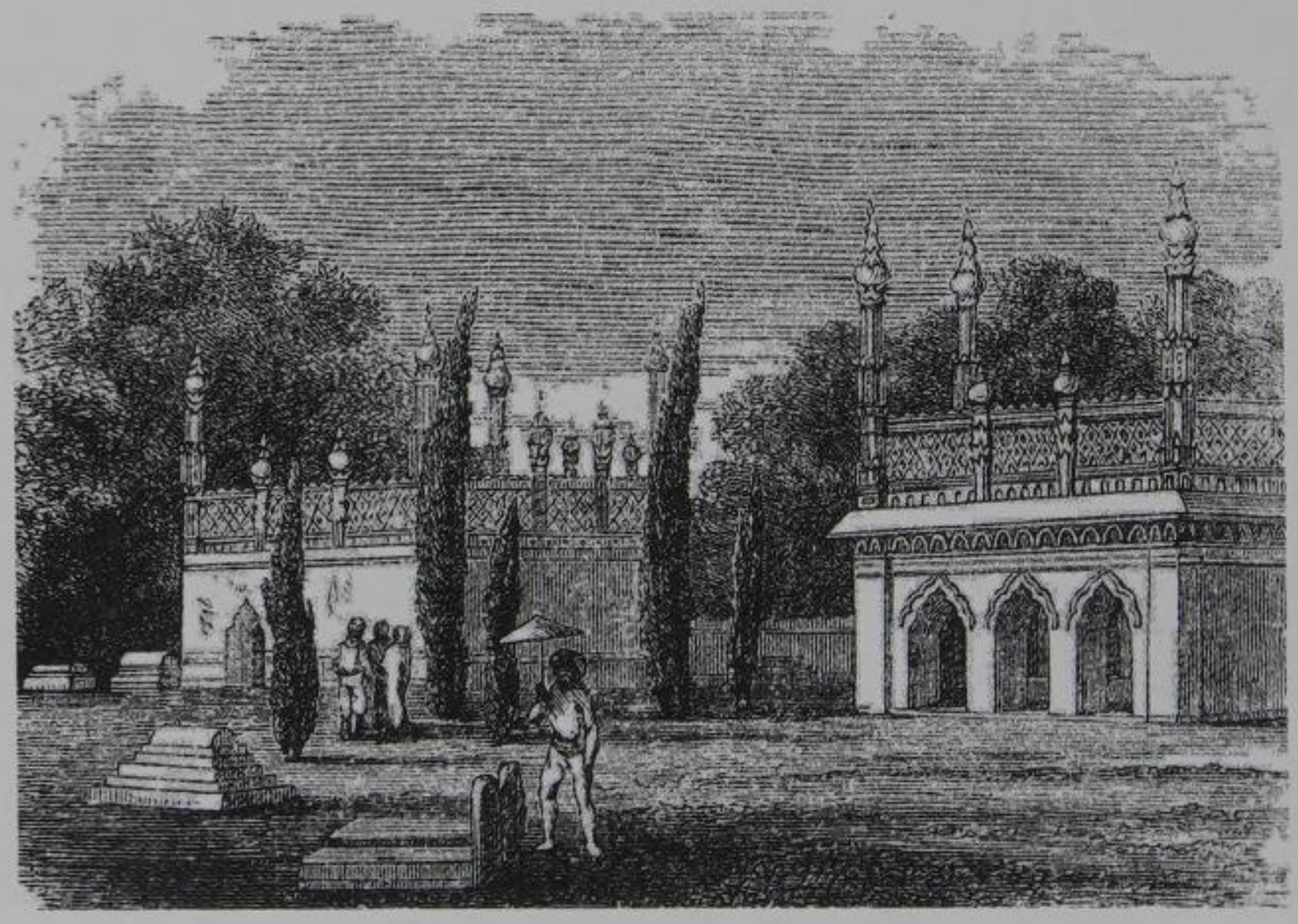
Preparations for a Suttee, the widow can be seen by the side of her husband's corpse.

"Forced entry"

A battle scene at Masulipatam.

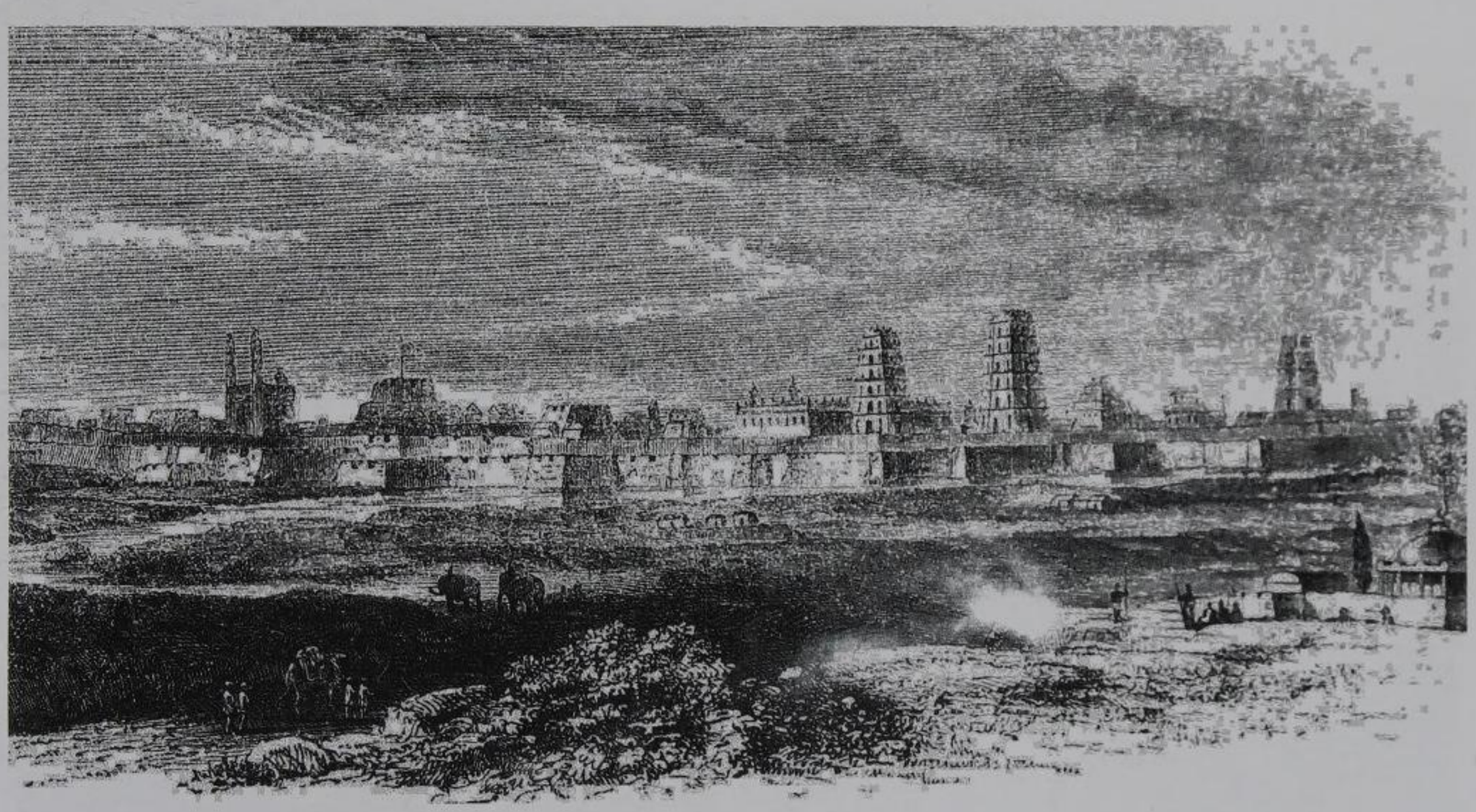
Hyder Ali or Haider Ali (c. 1722–1782)
ruler of Mysore.

Tippoo Sultan or Sultan Fateh Ali Tipu
(1750–1799), son of Haider Ali.

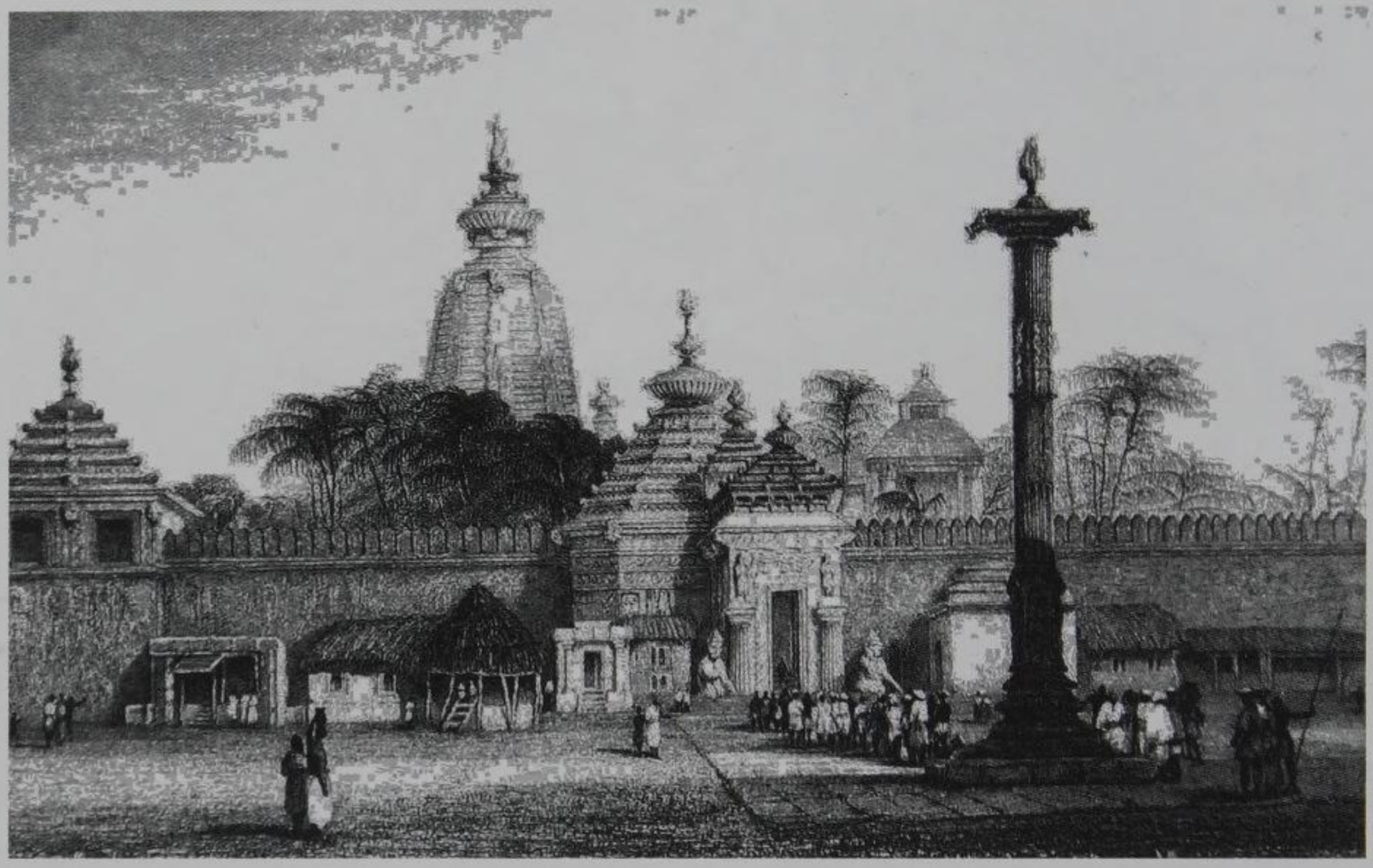


Haider Ali's family tomb at Colar.

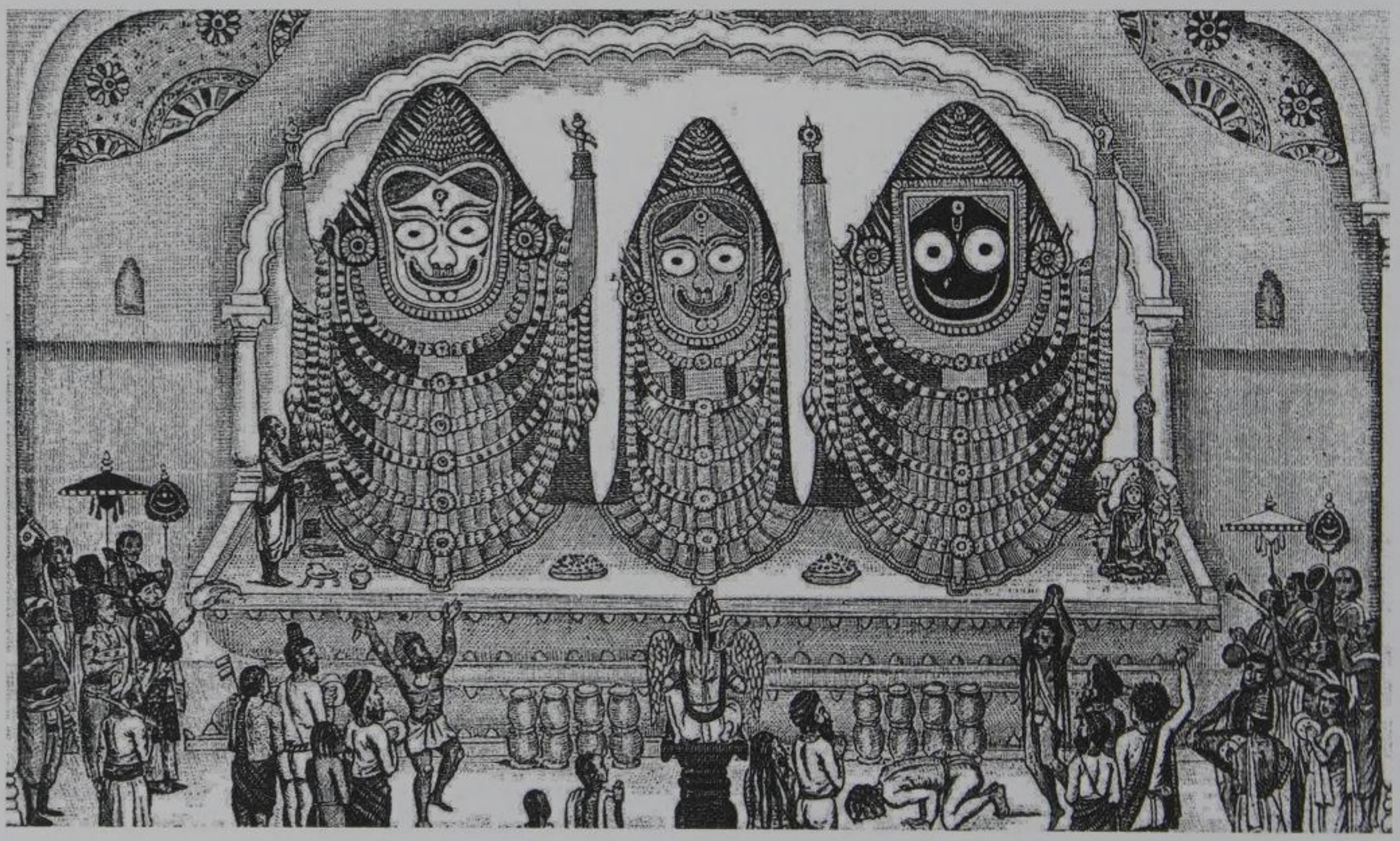
Plan of the island of Seringapatam.



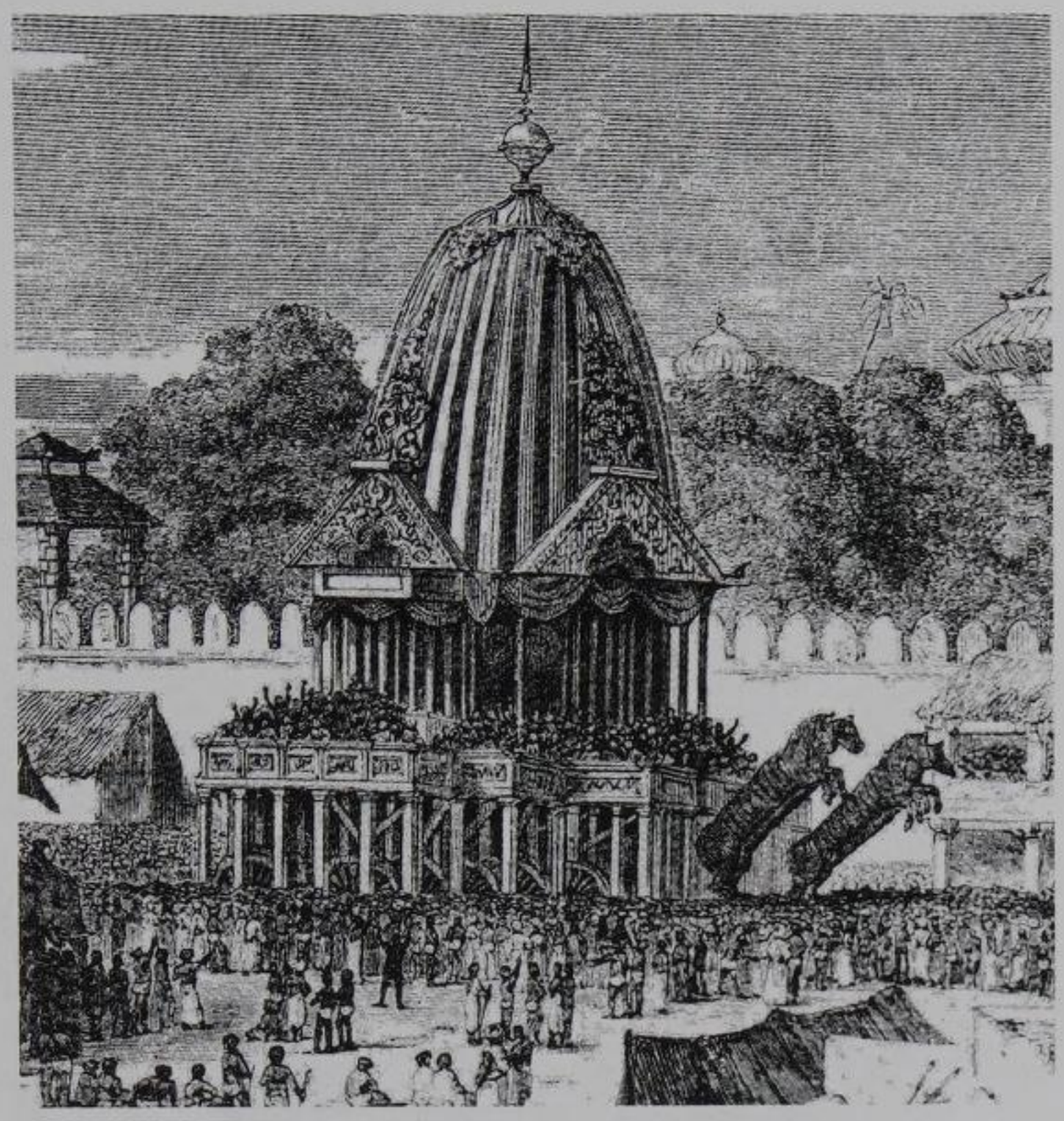
North-east view of Seringapatam.



The great temple complex of Jaggernaut.



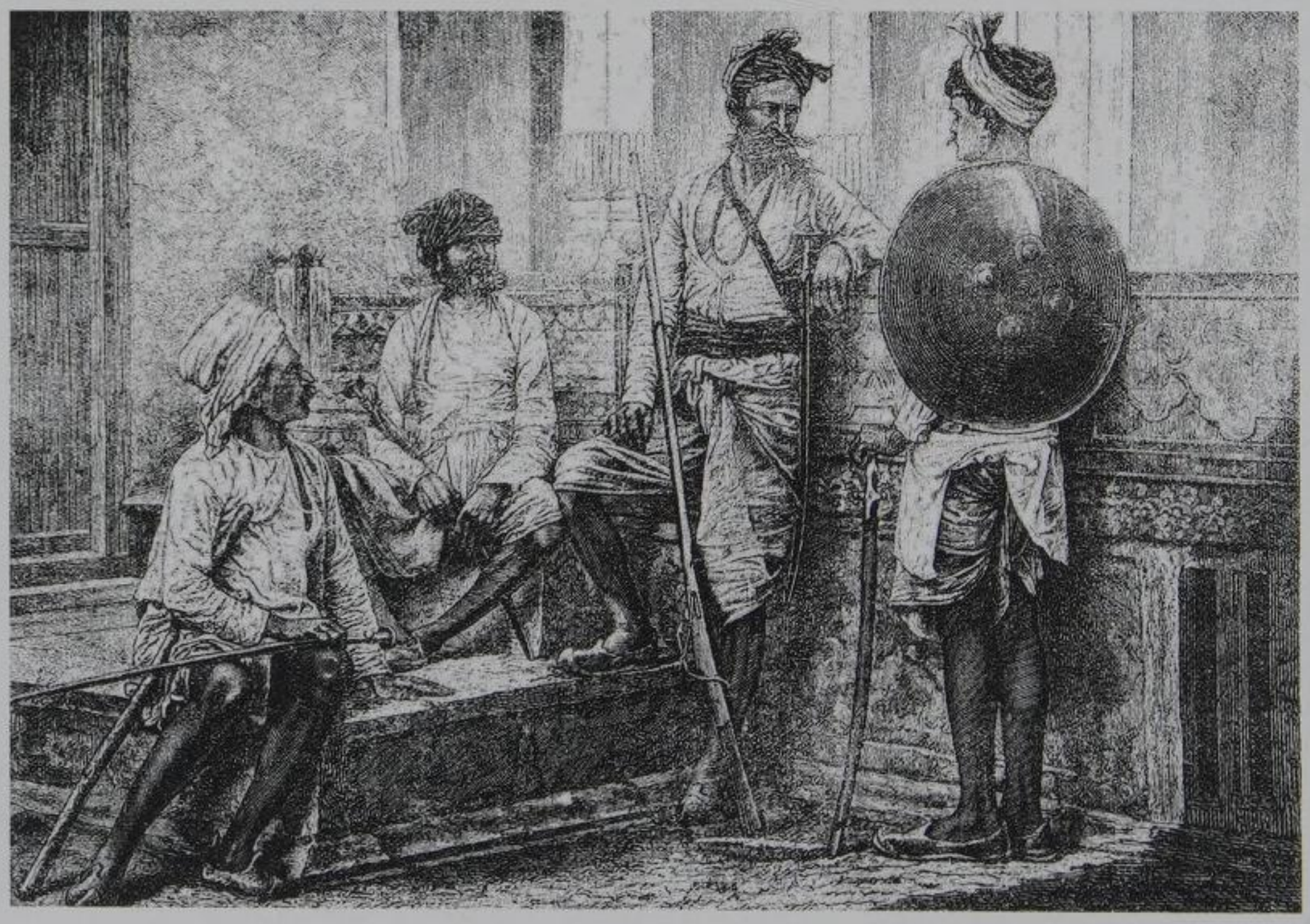
Images within the Temple of Jaggernaut.



The great wooden Rath (chariot) of Jaggernaut.

The Swinging Festival of the Hindus.

A Brinjaree couple.



Rajpoot warriors.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Terence R. Blackburn was born in London in 1938. He served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in Germany, and later continued his work in the field of health care until his retirement.

Encouraged by Noel F. Singer, a long time friend, he developed and interest in Burmese culture and history, and that country's relationship with Great Britain. Under the guidance of Singer, whose formative years were spent in Burma, he has produced five books in which he has attempted to define the British attitude towards the Burmese, often to the detriment of the former.

The British Humiliation of Burma (2000)

The British Lion and the Burmese Tiger: Campbell and Maha Bandula (2002)

A Sadistic Scholar:
Captain Latter's War (2002)

An Ill-Conditioned Cad:
Moylan of the Times (2002)

Burma and the Enemy Within (2006)

A Further two books concentrate on India.

A Miscellany of Mutinies and Massacres in India (2007)

Justice for the Raja of Sattara? (2007)

He firmly believes that there are always two sides to every story and that equal weight should be given to both.

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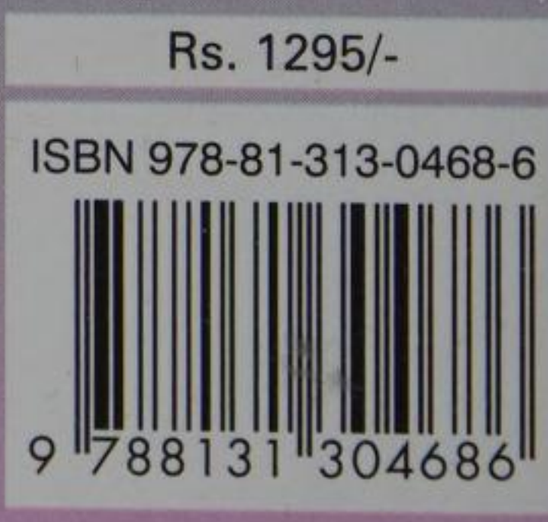
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